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Life of the Right Hon.
Sir Alfred Comyn Lyall

FROM THE PORTRAIT BY J. J. SHANNON, R.A., 1890.

Life of the Right Hon.

Sir Alfred Comyn Lyall

P.C., K.C.B., G.C.I.E., D.C.L., LL.D.

BY

SIR MORTIMER DURAND

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WITH ILLUSTRATIONS

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PREFACE.

THIS Memoir has been undertaken at the request of Lady Lyall and Sir Alfred Lyall's family, who have placed at my disposal his diaries and papers.

In preparing it I have avoided almost entirely the use of official documents. Though Sir Alfred Lyall was an official for nearly fifty years, and wrote many valuable State papers, it has seemed to me that his life, character, and views could be sufficiently, and best, illustrated by means of his private letters and literary works. State papers, especially papers on Indian questions, even if they can properly be published, are not attractive to the majority of readers; and any attempt to publish such papers would have involved writing this book upon an unduly large scale.

The spelling of Indian names and words is always a difficulty. A biographer has no right to tamper with the spelling of words in the letters he quotes; but the forms in use fifty years ago have now in

the process of evolution become obsolete, and it would not be desirable to revert to them. In this book, therefore, such forms as Hindu and Hindoo, Gujar and Goojur, will be found side by side. At the same time I have not tried to adhere to the scientifically correct spelling in all cases, as I found this led to obscurity and other complications.

The illustrations have been kindly supplied by Sir Alfred Lyall's family, who have throughout done their utmost to help me in all ways. Some of the portraits of him are striking likenesses, especially the one facing page 234, which shows him as he was from about 1875 to 1880.

I am under great obligations to his friends: to Sir Steuart Bayley for much help given in various ways; to Viscount Morley of Blackburn, the Earl of Cromer, Lord and Lady Tennyson, the Archbishop of Canterbury, and Miss Oakeley, for allowing me to use letters and giving me valuable information; to Earl Roberts, and Earl Curzon of Kedleston, for letting me see much interesting correspondence; to Lord George Hamilton, M. René de Kerallain, Miss Gertrude Lowthian Bell, Lady Lyttelton, the Hon. Emily Lawless, Colonel de Kantzow, and Sir West Ridgeway, for sending me letters and other material; to Edith, Countess of Lytton, for a letter of Lord Lytton's and information about him; to Bishop Wilkinson for writing notes of his remin-

iscences; to Sir William Lee Warner, Mr James Kennedy, Colonel Rivett-Carnac, and Mr Edward Clodd, for advice on several points; to Mr Wardlaw Kennedy for much help about Haileybury College; to the Hon. Arthur Elliot, Mr W. L. Courtney, Mr G. W. Prothero, and the Editors of 'The Cornhill Magazine' and 'National Review' for enabling me to trace Sir Alfred Lyall's articles, and giving me information about them.

The Duchess of Rutland and Messrs Constable have kindly authorised me to use the portrait on page 346.

Finally, I have to thank Messrs Longmans, Green, & Co., for permitting the republication of extracts from an article in 'The Edinburgh Review,' and the Editor of 'The Times,' for letting me republish a letter addressed to him.

H. M. DURAND.

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ALFRED COMYN LYALL.

CHAPTER I.

THE LYALL FAMILY.

1761–1835.

The name of Lyall well known on the Scottish border—George Lyall, farmer, of Greystonelees, in the county of Berwick—Builds house in Berwick, 1761—His son, John Lyall, goes to England, engages in shipping business, and prospers—John Lyall's five sons—Eldest becomes Member of Parliament and Director of East India Company—Youngest takes orders—His character and writings—Marries Mary Broadwood—His second son, Alfred Comyn, the subject of this memoir.

For many generations the name of Lyall has been well known on the Scottish border, especially among the Lowland farmers, and in the middle of the eighteenth century one George Lyall was living at Greystonelees, in the county of Berwick. This is a small farm standing on a hillside, with a beautiful outlook over the fishing hamlet of Burnmouth and the waters of the North Sea.

George Lyall was evidently a man of energy and thrift, for in 1761, when he was thirty years of age, he had saved money enough to buy a piece of land in the Castle Gate of Berwick-on-Tweed. There he built himself a house, which is still standing, of stone

quarried at Greystonelees, and entered into business as an owner of small shipping craft.

The Lyalls spelt their names in various ways, and it is said that George Lyall had in his possession some old family seals and rings bearing the crest of the Lylls or Lyles, formerly owners of the castle and Barony of Duchal in Renfrew, one of whom was killed at Flodden. This family became extinct early in the seventeenth century; but George Lyall seems to have regarded himself as belonging to the same stock, and his descendants retained or adopted the crest and arms. Whether there was any real connection between the old-time Lyalls and Lylls is not known. All that can be said for certain is that the Lyalls belonged to the sturdy Border population which used to give so much trouble to the English of the northern counties, and has preserved so many traditions of foray and fight.

The parish of Ayton, in which Greystonelees is situated, bore even in the eighteenth century a picturesque reputation. 'The Statistical Account of Scotland, 1791,' says of Ayton: "Tradesmen and labourers in the village are addicted to the pernicious habit of using tea. Of late also the execrable custom of dram-drinking is gaining ground even among the women of the lower class. Habits so inimical to health, industry, and morals ought to be checked if possible." Up to the beginning of the century women seem to have been burned in the neighbourhood as witches. A later statistical account, of 1845, "written by the minister, Rev. George

Tough," has the following words about Greystonelees itself: "Here there is a pretty good set of offices, and a thrashing-mill driven by water. Here, too, there is reason to suspect that smuggling has been carried on in former times. There is on this property a place called 'Catch a penny,' well adapted for that purpose by its retired situation on the edge of the adjoining moor (Lamberton Moor) and immediately above Burnmouth. It was probably so nicknamed from its receiving a share of the booty. There was a common saying in Eyemouth when any strange sail was seen in the offing at night and disappeared, that 'she had gone round to Catch a penny.'"

It is possible that some of the occupants of Greystonelees may have abetted their countrymen in the pernicious habit of using tea; but the conjectures of the minister are only conjectures, and in any case there is nothing to connect them with George Lyall. He died in 1801, not rich, but a man of standing and repute, and was buried with his wife, Margaret Nisbet, in the churchyard at Ayton.

His eldest son, John Lyall, to whom he had been able to give a good education, but little more, came to England and engaged in the shipping business. This, especially during the American and French wars, was a venturesome and exciting trade, in which much money was lost and won. John Lyall did well for himself, and besides a house in London he was able to buy a small estate at Findon in Sussex, where he settled down. He must have been a man of active habits, for he carried on his business from Findon,

going backwards and forwards frequently on horseback. It is said that he habitually covered the distance to London, not much short of fifty miles, in a morning's ride. John Lyall married Jane Comyn, whose father, a "broken" man, of an old Scottish family, had been out in the '45. The marriage resulted in a large family of children, and when John Lyall died in 1805 he left five sons surviving him.

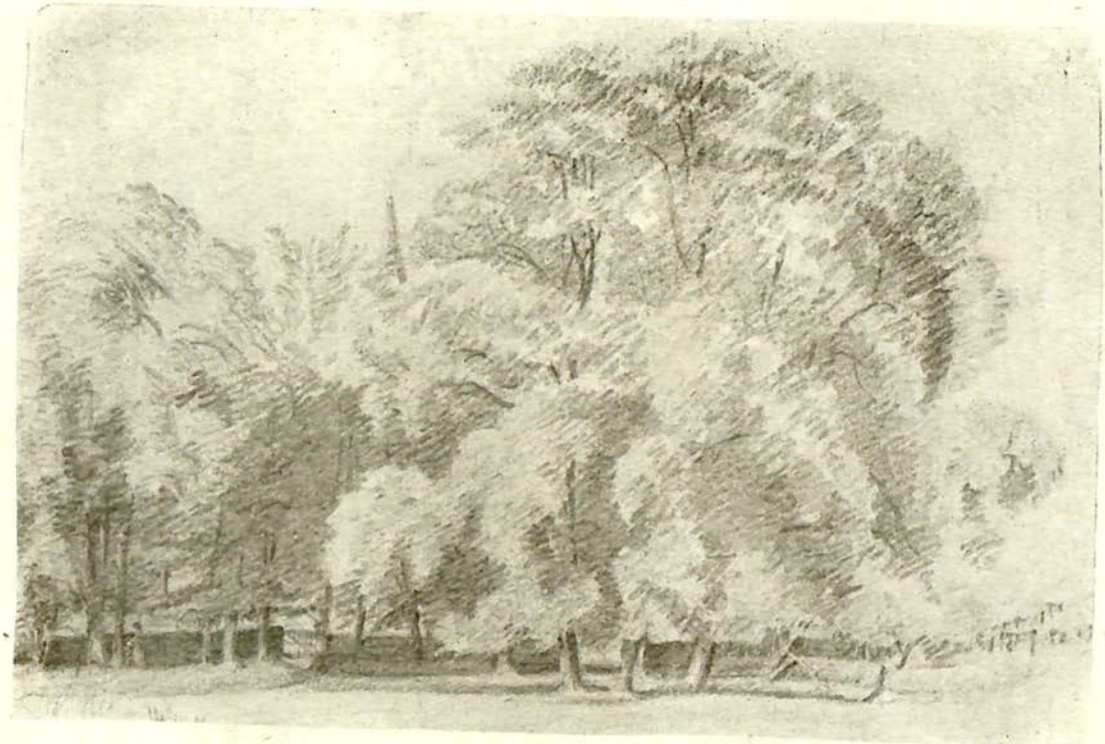
Of these sons the eldest, George, succeeded to the business and the property at Findon. He became a Director of the East India Company, and was twice chairman. He was also twice elected a Member of Parliament for the City of London, where he had much influence. Another son entered the army, and died a Lieut.-Colonel in India. A third took orders, and, after gaining a high reputation for wit and learning, ended as Dean of Canterbury. A fourth was an officer in the Navy. The youngest son, born in 1795, also took orders, and died as Rector of Harbledown, one of the Canterbury parishes.

Of this youngest son, Alfred, it is necessary to say something more. After being educated at Eton and Trinity College, Cambridge, he spent several years in study and travel, especially in Italy, where he acquired some knowledge of art. In 1827 he published a book called 'Rambles in Madeira and in Portugal,' which gives a pleasant account of men, manners, and scenery. He is described by one of his sons as a man of romantic tastes, and a meditative, dreamy character. It is said that once, having wandered into a London auction-room, he awoke from a day-

dream to find himself the owner of a picture twelve feet square, which he had never meant to buy, and had no room to hang. A passage in his book of Rambles shows his love of solitude: "I enjoy all this much; besides, there is a prodigious independence in being alone. In the option between the ennui of being always in society or that of being never in it, I think we should hardly hesitate to prefer the latter." He was an incessant reader, a serious student of history and of philosophical works, but also a lover of poetry. When not dreaming, or immersed in his books, he is said to have been a delightful companion, full of kindly wit, and he had the reputation of being a bold rider. His absence of mind and fondness for desultory reading had prevented his gaining at school or college the distinction which his abilities seemed to promise; and but for the urgent representations of his elder brother, the future Dean, he might perhaps have spent his life rather aimlessly; but after writing a second book, 'Principles of Necessary and Contingent Truth,' which appeared in 1830, he yielded to his brother's advice, and took upon himself the vows of a clergyman. Even so, though he was a convinced and faithful son of the Church, and did much good to the people about him, he was "broad" in his views, and the bent of his mind was always towards literature and philosophic study rather than towards the usual work of a country parson. He does not seem to have written much, but he remained an omnivorous reader and a close critic of the works of others;

and in 1856 he brought out a book which gained him a certain reputation—'Agonistes or Philosophical Strictures.' It is an interesting book, showing research and earnestness of thought, but it is not marked by any great charm of style or sense of humour. By this time he was a man of more than sixty, with a family of ten children, and the cares of life had gathered upon him. He had become grave and silent, and, though deeply affectionate, was perhaps inclined at times to take a rather stern view of duty.

When about thirty-seven years of age he had married a girl of twenty,—Mary Broadwood, a daughter of James Broadwood of Lyne, in Sussex. The Broadwoods, like the Lyalls, were originally from the Border, but they had in them some Highland blood, and had also intermarried with the Swiss Tschudis, or von Tschudis, a family of some distinction in literature and diplomacy. According to her grandson, Bernard Holland, — and the opinion is borne out by Mary Broadwood's letters, — she was "of a quick, lively, practical disposition, with a high ideal of life and conduct, swift to think and see, and also to feel, and capable therefore at times of deep depressions." But the most striking feature of her character seems to have been unselfishness. It was remarked about her that she was one of the few people who were always sincerely and warmly pleased at any success or good fortune which came to others. She was also, like her husband, very well read, especially in poetry; and she shared his love of art. Active and energetic,



FINDON CHURCH. FROM A PENCIL SKETCH BY MRS LYALL, 1829.

she more than once travelled with him to Italy; and when in England she rode with him over the Sussex downs. Though their characters were in some points unlike, they had many tastes in common, and the marriage was a thoroughly happy one.

Their children were not of an ordinary type. The second son, christened Alfred Comyn, in memory of his father and grandmother, is the subject of this memoir.

CHAPTER II.

CHILDHOOD AND SCHOOL DAYS.

1835–1852.

Alfred Lyall born at Coulsdon, 1835—Childhood at Godmersham Vicarage —Entered at Eton, 1845—Early letters—Admitted to college—School work—Dislikes mathematics—Does well in classics—Taste for Latin verses and English poetry—No special success in games—Not many friends—Thinks of an Indian career—Head of Fifth Form, 1851—Among select for Newcastle Scholarship, 1852—Leaves Eton.

ALFRED LYALL was born on the 4th of January 1835, at Coulsdon in Surrey, where his father was acting as curate in charge. But his recollections of his birthplace must have been small, for when he was only four years old his father became Vicar of Godmersham, a secluded but beautiful village in the valley of the Stour, a few miles from Canterbury. Here Alfred Lyall spent his childhood, and to Godmersham he came home for his holidays during his earlier years at school.

It was a pleasant home. The Vicarage, a little red-brick house, lies by the roadside under the foot of a hill, some tall lime-trees across the road almost overhanging the house. At the back a lawn slopes down to the stream, and beyond this is the well-timbered rolling Kentish country. In summer the old-fashioned garden is full of wallflower, which makes the whole air sweet. Close by, to the right, is a pic-

COULSDON RECTORY. From a Pencil Sketch by Mrs Lyall, June 18, 1835.

turesque farm, and a little farther on the old flint-built church.

In those days boys were sent to public schools early, and Alfred Lyall was little more than ten years old when, following in his father's footsteps, he was entered at Eton. He wrote his name in Dr Hawtrey's book on the 19th May 1845. The college records show that his tutor was Charles J. Abraham, and his dame Miss Edgar.

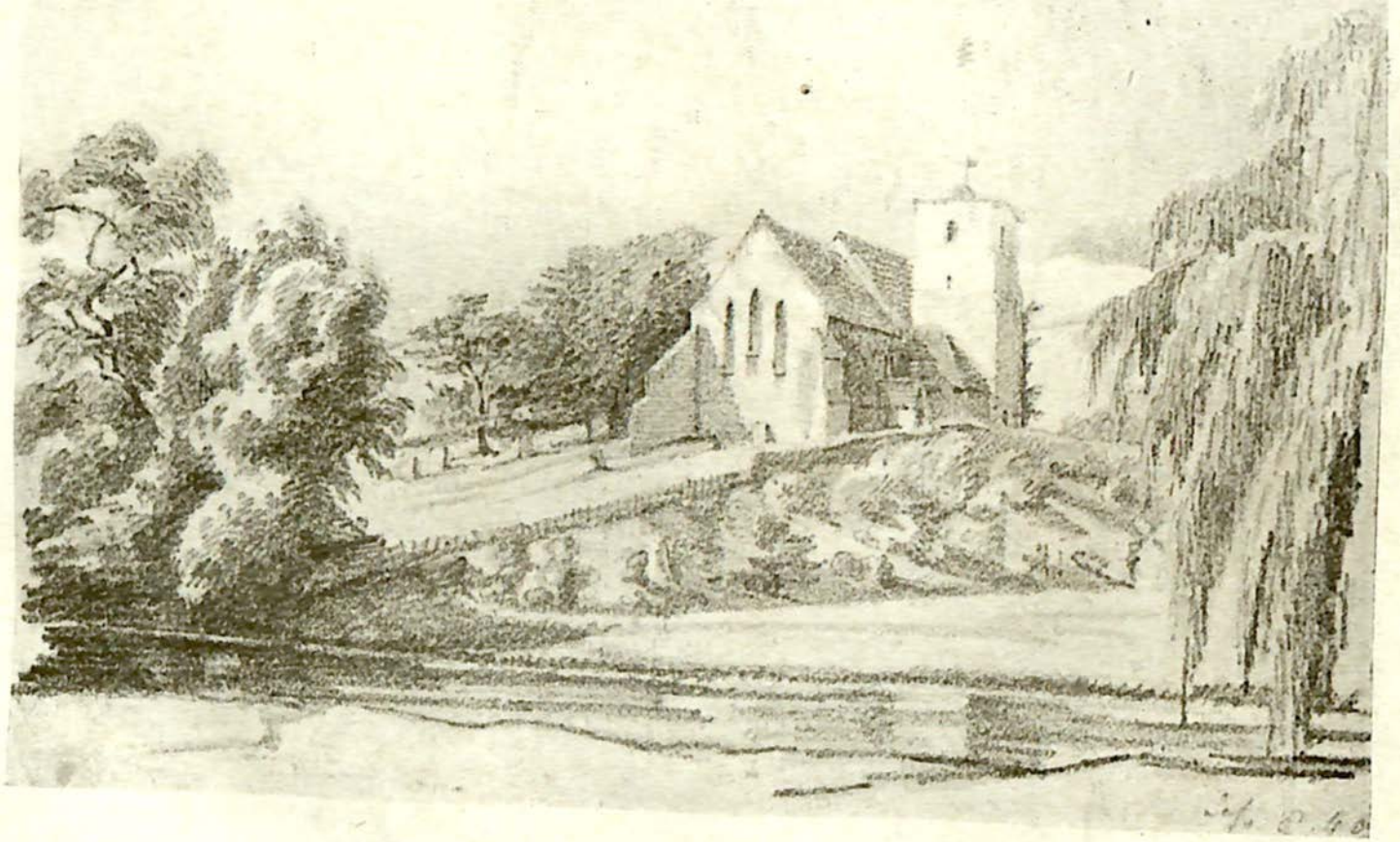
Except for a few weeks, when he and his brother used to ride over on their ponies to a master in Rye, he had not been sent to any preparatory school; but he had been taught some Latin by his father, "in the dining-room at Godmersham," and had evidently been well grounded in other respects, for his earliest letters from Eton show that he was soon at the top of his form, disputing the first place with a boy of the name of Bent.

At this time Alfred Lyall was a slight and delicate child, with very deep coloured blue-grey eyes,—set rather close together,—black hair, and a dark colourless complexion. It had been noticed at his christening that he was not as fine a boy as his elder brother; and when he grew out of his babyhood he seems to have been troubled by various small ailments which told on his strength. He was never robust—never, for instance, very strong on his legs or a quick runner. Possibly his want of vigorous health made him the dearer to his mother, and she is said to have had for him a peculiar tenderness of which his brothers and sisters were not wholly unconscious.

But the early letters from Eton, which his mother preserved, certainly do not show that he was suffering from serious ill-health, nor often from low spirits. They are bright letters, carelessly written, almost wholly without stops, but well spelt and well expressed for his age, and full of enjoyment.

It was a family trick to leave letters undated, so that at times one does not find it easy to make sure of the year to which these Eton letters belong, but in most cases the contents and handwriting leave little doubt.

The first, wholly undated, begins rather characteristically: "From what I have seen of Eton I like it very much, for as papa says you have nearly as much play as lessons." And evidently there was not much bullying. Though generally described as a sensitive and emotional boy, he does not seem to have been in any way seriously tormented. Of course he has the usual rubs of a new boy. His hat gets kicked up and down the stairs, and a little later he writes: "Yesterday being the 29th we had a whole holiday and every boy who has not a sprig of oak with him has a pinch These pinches are no common ones they hurt pretty well and a kick is generally administered with it but not always." Such small chastenings he takes philosophically. His letters are always free from complaint. "I like Eton more and more as I stay here for I am known pretty well now and am not much bothered and feel it is a kind of honour to be an Etonian." And there are cheery descriptions of the 4th of June, and of some street fights in Ascot week,



GODMERSHAM CHURCH. FROM A PENCIL SKETCH BY MRS LYALL, 1840.

upon which he quaintly observes: "To-day has been a day full of accidents I thank God I am not hurt." He discovers his father's name cut on "that low wall in front of the college," and proposes to cut his own by it. I can find no trace of either name now. For generations the low brick wall with its stone coping has been the favourite seat of innumerable boys, and the top is hollowed and polished with wear.

He learns to swim, and gets the mumps, during the course of which he observes that "Miss Edgar has treated me very kindly she has let me have anything I liked and got some spunge-cakes for me and let me order anything reasonable I liked for dinner I am very glad I have got so good a dame." Towards the end of the term he writes: "This week is a jolly week for us we have two whole holidays and one half holiday and are excused five o'clock lessons since our tutor is gone so we have no verses or exercise." It does not sound like hard work, yet the letter continues: "I am going to try for college this time but I am afraid I shall not get in for there are only twelve vacancies and twenty boys wanting to get in however I shall do my best." About the same time he writes to his mother: "I wrote you rather a melancholy letter last time but I happened to be in rather low spirits for I do not know what I sometimes am but in general I am very happy here. . . . Miss Edgar is very careful and kind but she could not be like you." In July he describes how a boy called Goodlake took a shilling bet that he would not go up and get flogged by Dr Hawtrey instead of a boy called Northcote,

and won it. Alfred Lyall has "many a fight" with a boy of his own age, or a little older, because "we neither submit to take a licking as the Eton phrase is." By that time he is occasionally "captain of our division" in school, but generally beaten by Bent, whose cleverness he envies; "but I am very happy here and have plenty of fun." Nevertheless, home is "the most beautiful place I can think of."

He thanks his mother for three shillings which she has sent him, "and be assured I will make no bad use of it." One day the Vice-Provost's wife, Mrs Grover, takes him in her carriage and "paid for some nice places for me to see the fireworks and I thought myself very lucky in knowing her." An undated letter, apparently of this time, informs his mother that "the Provost has got a little boy (I thought he was too old) we are to have a holiday this week in honour of it. . . . Next week trials will begin and I hope I shall be placed Middle Fourth If I am it is certain that I shall take Upper Fourth at Christmas." He was placed Middle Fourth, and the try for college was successful, for the school records show that he was elected on the 28th July 1845, and admitted, doubtless at the end of the summer holidays, on the 12th September.

Alfred Lyall was now fairly started upon his Eton life, and in the comparatively studious atmosphere of college; but I do not think that during the next six years there was much change in his way of looking at his school work. He never seems to have had any difficulty in remaining at or near the head of his

division, but before he was sixteen he never really "sapped." Long afterwards he writes from India: "Continual work narrows the mind"; and this is the principle upon which he appears to have acted throughout. He says himself, writing of his school days, that up to sixteen he was "idle." In mathematics, not then a compulsory subject, he was below the average. An Eton letter, dated "Thursday, October," written perhaps later, when mathematics had become a part of the regular curriculum, tells his mother that he is "wading through fractions, having succeeded by a little study in overtaking in some degree my equals in age. . . . Still my detestation for Euclid and figures is immeasurable." But he adds: "I return with great pleasure to 'the mighty minds of old' and their writings," and the school records show that in classics he was several times "sent up for good." He evidently had the knack of turning off Latin verses, for in later life he complains that writing different letters from the same materials reminds him of his school days, when he used to write verses upon the same subject for two or three boys. And in a school letter to his brother he remarks that he has Greek iambics to do, and cannot "put them off to the last minute and trust to inspiration, as I can with Latin verses." In another school letter, written when he was barely fifteen, he says:—

I have had Juvenal bound, and have read nearly all one satire; and I have been reading a lot of odds and ends lately, and especially poetry, with which my mind is full, and which, if it does nothing else, improves my style of verses. Of course

I mean English poetry, except Horace, which I learn by heart both for pleasure and for its utility.

After all, this is not a bad form of idleness.

According to his own account he had very few friends at Eton, which seems likely enough, for he was always reserved; though I may observe that his school letters mention several boys as friends of his, and none as enemies. In fact, his letters are remarkably free from criticism of others, as they are also from boasting; and such a temper of mind usually begets goodwill. But he was not forward in beginning close friendships, and he never achieved the popularity which comes from rising to the first rank in games. He played football and cricket, and became respectable both as a bat and as a bowler; and he was in a way fond of the river; but he took his games very much as he did his school work, not too seriously, and so never reached the glories of the Eleven or the Eight. Still, even if he had few friends, he certainly enjoyed his life. In a letter, dated "Thursday, March,"—exasperating but happy boy,—he writes at seven o'clock one bright spring morning: "This, being the last week of this half, has been a splendid week, we have had hardly anything to do, and have been playing cricket all these fine days, and going out to walk. . . . The river shines and looks beautiful and so does the old castle and everything."

In the meantime he had begun to think of an Indian career; for in a letter, dated "Sunday, 21st," written, I should guess, before he was sixteen, he says: "My wish about India remains the same." A

year or more later, to judge by the look of the letter, he writes: "I see the Indian mail has arrived, so a word at the bank might produce something for your affectionate son, A. C. Lyall." He adds in another letter: "You need not trouble yourself, for while I am free at Eton I shall be in no hurry to go. You can't imagine what a pleasant life it is in the summer here, —a sort of panorama of cool shades and bright waters, cricket and ices, boating and bread and cheese." But evidently the idea of India had attracted him early, and the attraction lasted in spite of some discouragement from his father and mother.

About the same time he had got into debt—rather seriously for a boy—and this caused some trouble at home. Alfred Lyall's father was a richer man than most clergymen, and his wife was well dowered, but he had a large family, and no doubt he disapproved on principle of a boy exceeding his allowance. In answer to a letter from him, Alfred Lyall writes: "I do not want any more money to be paid for me. . . . I am very much obliged to you for your very kind offers of paying off a part of it, . . . but you say that I must feel a penalty, and if so I will sooner bear it altogether than get out of it in a small degree by pressing you." But the money seems to have been paid, for soon afterwards he writes to his mother: "I received your kind letter with much pleasure, and I hope I shall be able to keep from debt at length, and as for my place, I will do the best I can, and read, if it is only to please you." His father and mother were always, or usually, more severe in word than in act.

He was very much a boy still. In the Exhibition year, 1851, he went back to Eton with some of the proceeds of the Godmersham poultry-yard packed in his portmanteau: "On unpacking, I first found out that out of sixteen eggs about four only remained whole, but still they were not all smashed, so I used about ten, but they had made a great mess."

It has been said that he was a delicate boy. Before he was seventeen he seems to have had two dangerous illnesses, for in his letters he talks of a schoolfellow dying, "though he had been prayed for," and says to his sister, "think what you would have felt if I had died, as I was so near." He had then been ill at Boulogne, not at Eton; but towards the end of his school days he had another attack, and his mother apparently went to Eton to nurse him. He recovered entirely, but the family had been anxious about him and he received much sympathy. A letter written not long afterwards shows that he had been paying visits in London. "All my aunts were very kind; I have not been kissed so much in the last five years as between Monday and Thursday." This, for a schoolboy, is a promising example of reserve in style—based, no doubt, on good feeling.

He had now begun, though only for a time, to date his letters, and one, of the 30th November 1851, shows how he was doing in school.

I am getting on decently in my capacity as captain of the Fifth Form—*i.e.*, the Fifth Form out of the Head Master's Division. . . . My tutor considers me immensely improved

in Greek and Latin composition, though I shall not be sent up, as my Master sends up nobody. However, it is some satisfaction to know that he pronounced me to be a very clever fellow, who could do anything he liked, in full pupil-room.

This is the strongest expression of self-satisfaction to be found in his school letters.

By the beginning of 1852 his younger brother James[1] was with him at Eton; and later in the year, being now seventeen, Alfred Lyall went up for the Newcastle Scholarship. He came out fifth among the "select," bracketed with three others, one of whom, Whitting, afterwards Vice-Provost of King's College, Cambridge, won the scholarship next year. For a first entry, Lyall's place was, it is said, extraordinarily good, and he must have worked hard to win it. James Lyall writes about this: "His tutor pressed my father to throw up the Indian appointment and let him stay on to win the Newcastle, and to get a scholarship at King's College, Cambridge, of which he said my brother was quite sure, but my brother preferred India to the other career."

Why he was so strongly drawn to the "Land of Regrets" I cannot say. Perhaps his soldier uncle's example had something to do with it. His elder brother, too, had already joined the Indian army, and was urging him to follow. But, apart from all this, he was a boy to whom the romance and colour of India would naturally appeal. Rather restless, and

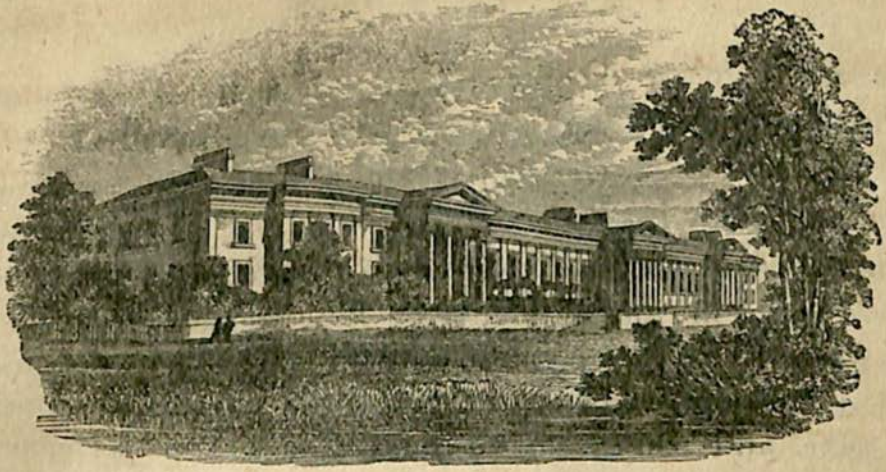
[1] Afterwards Sir James Lyall, K.C.S.I., G.C.I.E., Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab.

not much inclined for steady work, but with a mind full of poetry and miscellaneous reading, he could hardly fail to be attracted by the idea of a life which promised so much change of scene and possibility of adventure.

> "And the slow toil of Europe seemed tiring,
> And the grey of his fatherland cold."

However this may be, he stuck to his decision, and, according to a note given to me by the Vice-Provost, he left Eton at Election 1852, "being then 3rd in Upper Division Fifth Form (Liberty)." That is to say, he was in the Head Master's Division, but just short of the Sixth Form. There were only about twenty boys in the Sixth, and vacancies were rare, as several were King's Scholars waiting to go up to Cambridge. In his own year Lyall was second.

So ended his school life. He had not greatly distinguished himself in any way, but he had shown that he had unusual ability; and though not a real scholar, he had been imbued with a taste for classical literature which was worth much to him in after years. Above all, he had spent a happy boyhood in a school which teaches, apart from its class-rooms, some of the best lessons an Englishman can learn.



SOUTH FRONT HAILEYBURY COLLEGE.

CHAPTER III.

HARBLEDOWN AND HAILEYBURY.

1852-1855.

Harbledown and Haileybury—Harbledown Rectory—Visit to Spain, April 1853—Receives nomination to Haileybury—Life at Haileybury—No prizes, but regarded as brilliant, especially in Latin verse—Writes for 'Haileybury Observer'—Specimens of his verses—Germ of "Theology in Extremis"—Leaves Haileybury, 1855.

AFTER leaving Eton Alfred Lyall seems to have remained for a time with his father and mother at Harbledown, a rectory to which his father had been transferred a few years earlier. It is a pleasant place, on a hill overlooking Canterbury; but I doubt whether the boys of the family ever loved it as they did the old home at Godmersham. They missed the country life, and society did not as yet appeal to them. In later years Alfred Lyall's thoughts turned with longing to the "hamlet in Saxon Kent," and "the vale which slopes to the English sea." Still,

he spent many happy days at Harbledown, where the family lived for nearly twenty years.

In April 1853 the father and son started together for a journey in France and Spain. It was a rather hurried trip, for the elder man's letters—written, by the way, in an indefensible hand—show that his heart was with his wife and children at home, and that he soon wanted to get back to them. Both father and son seem to have found the perpetual sight-seeing rather wearisome; and the boy's knowledge of foreign languages, then very small, was not much increased. "I have picked up a little more French already," he writes to his mother from Paris, "but I am still miserably unintelligible." Both had acquired a smattering of Spanish, but neither knew enough to make himself understood. It was a rough journey too, very different from the easy run in the *train de luxe* of the present day. Between Bordeaux and Bayonne they spent a whole day and night, from five o'clock one morning to three o'clock the next, their "diligence" being dragged hour after hour through deep sand by seven or eight horses. Yet they both enjoyed it more or less, and their joint letters to Harbledown are cheery enough. To the boy it was all new and striking. By the 23rd April, after eighteen days' travelling, they were in Madrid; and there he saw "what I most wished to see in Spain—*i.e.*, a bull fight." He went alone, but fell in with a Russian who spoke excellent English, and seems to have been much interested. He describes the bull fight, accurately enough, as "a very exciting

spectacle but horribly cruel." What seems to have particularly pleased him in Madrid was the dress of the ladies,—not so much their beauty, but the mantilla and the fan and the rest of the picturesque semi-oriental attire. A month later the travellers were back in England.

Soon afterwards Alfred Lyall received from his uncle a nomination to the East India Company's College at Haileybury, where during the first half of the nineteenth century the young civil servants of the Company were prepared for their future career. It was a short-lived institution, lasting only from 1809 to 1857, but it produced some great administrators, and to this day there is some doubt whether the civilians afterwards chosen by open competition have proved equal to the Haileybury men.

However this may be, I do not think that Alfred Lyall found it a very congenial place, or that he looked back to it in after years with any special affection. I do not remember to have ever heard him speak of it; and the only reference to it in hundreds of his letters is not complimentary: "one well-organised humbug." The life was rough, even at times rather rowdy; and a boy coming from the refined classical atmosphere of the Head Master's Division at Eton may not have found himself altogether at home in it.

He did not make many friends. His favourite companion was George Nelson Barlow, in after life one of the cheeriest and most unselfish of men; and there were a few more with whom he was on good

terms; but he was always reserved, perhaps rather fastidious, and he does not seem to have been generally popular. One of his contemporaries at Haileybury writes that he was noted for a tendency to use "out-of-the-way words," and this possibly went against him. With the young barbarians who formed the majority anything that savoured of over culture would naturally have been disliked.

At Haileybury, as at Eton, Lyall took things easily, and he did not win any prizes. This, according to some of his contemporaries, was mainly due to the fact that he had in his term a classical scholar of exceptional ability, Maxwell Melvill, afterwards Judge of the High Court in Bombay, who was also exceptionally hard working. But Lyall was nevertheless regarded as one of the most brilliant men of his year, and the general opinion was that if he had chosen to work he would have been hard to beat. Sir Steuart Bayley, himself a prizeman, remembers the classical professor showing him a set of verses by Lyall as the best ever sent up at Haileybury. Lyall told a friend long afterwards that Haileybury teaching was bad, and gave as an illustration a story which is characteristic in more ways than one. He had seen in a collection of Latin verses by well-known scholars a rendering of some English poem, and had been so much pleased with it that he had learned it by heart. At Haileybury he was given this poem to turn into Latin, and feeling lazy, he wrote down the lines he remembered — guarding himself by putting small quotation marks at top and bottom. He was not

found out, but, he said, the lines were not thought good enough to win first place.

In one way he did distinguish himself—by some literary contributions to 'The Haileybury Observer,' a magazine kept up by the students. Sir Steuart Bayley, who, like Lyall, was an Etonian, and was also a member of the Editorial Committee, which Lyall was not, has contributed to 'Memorials of Old Haileybury College,' an article on the college literature. Speaking of volume viii. of 'The Observer,' he says: "But the most interesting name among the contributors is that of Alfred C. Lyall. He is credited with two serious poems, one of which, the 'Ultimo suspiro del Moro,' is noticeable; also with a skit on contemporary 'Bores'; but, besides these, he is credited with several other pieces, which I believe from internal evidence to be wrongly attributed to him. On the other hand, there are some pieces in the volume, such as 'Boabdil's Farewell to Granada,' which, though signed by the initials of other students, have more touch of the master-hand than some of the pieces attributed to him." This exchange of initials seems a curious arrangement, but Sir Steuart Bayley's judgment in the matter is not likely to be at fault, and it is supported by the fact of Lyall's recent visit to Spain. A skit on contemporary bores, too, is just what might have been expected from him, for he never suffered bores gladly. To show the bent and promise of his mind, a few extracts from these early productions may not be out of place.

"El ultimo suspiro del Moro," which is credited to

Lyall on conjecture, puts into Boabdil's mouth the following lament:—

"Fallen is Granada's standard now, that waved for many a year,
All blunted is her scimitar, and broken is her spear.
The Moorish horn no more shall ring o'er field and mountain free,
No more Granada's gates pour forth her swarthy chivalry."

"Boabdil's Farewell," which is signed, possibly as a practical joke, with the initials of a specially unpoetical student, takes up the tale, in blank verse, from the point where "El ultimo suspiro" had left off, and its opening lines are as follows:—

"So spake Boabdil, and in mournful guise
Stretched forth his hands to lost Granada's towers,
And turning wept. . . .
. . . . . .
Just then upon the citadel beneath
Rose high the Christian flag, and far and wide
The trumpet's voice proclaimed the city won.
Turned at the echo all that swarthy band,
And when above their own Alhambra's keep
They saw the Cross unfurled, and from the vale
The distant ring of trumpets reached their ear,
With barbarous cry and clashing scimitars
Called on the Koran and their Prophet's name,
And waved their spears against the distant foe,
And shouted 'Allah-Hu,' their war cry old."

The skit on bores, headed "Infandos jubeor renovare dolores," opens with the following passage, which is very like Lyall:—

There are certain minor misfortunes for which the sufferer meets with no sympathy, but, on the contrary, with ridicule. A man is pitied if he gets a severe blow on the head, but if

he complains of mosquito bites he is laughed at. I am, metaphorically speaking, a mosquito-bitten individual, for my evil destiny has so ordered it that I am continually the victim of small annoyances, which are laughed at by every one else, and at which I cannot help sometimes laughing myself, despite my vexation. . . . What a misfortune is a long-winded friend. . . .

Then there is an ode to "Dark-eyed Nell," of which this is a stanza :—

"No more shall flowers the meads adorn,
Nor sweetness deck the rosy thorn,
Nor swelling buds proclaim the spring,
Nor parching heats the dog-star bring,
Nor laughing lilies paint the grove,
When dark-eyed Nell I cease to love."

But perhaps the most interesting of these pieces is one which has not so far been attributed to Lyall. In one of his early letters, of 1856, to his old friend Mr Carrington, Dean of Bocking, is a reference to some verses on the "Battle of Inkerman." Looking through 'The Observer' volumes during a visit to Haileybury, I came upon a piece bearing this title, and was struck by the resemblance between some lines of it and a stanza in Lyall's published poem, "Theology in Extremis."

"Oh! ye men who sleep, untold, in the many graves of old,
By your country whom ye served never known;
As ye perish I shall die; as ye moulder I shall lie
In the dust without a name
Or a stone!

"I must be gone to the crowd untold
Of men by the cause which they served unknown,
Who moulder in myriad graves of old;
Never a story and never a stone
Tells of the martyrs who died like me,
Just for the pride of the old countree."

The two pieces have also some other points of similarity. Sir Steuart Bayley, to whom the earlier piece is by conjecture attributed, writes about it: "I can say most positively that I did not write the 'Battle of Inkerman,' and I hail your solution as almost certainly correct." He points out as practically conclusive the peculiar use of the word "untold" in both pieces. It seems clear, therefore, that we have in this earlier piece the germ of "Theology in Extremis," generally regarded as Lyall's best poem.

To pass on from 'The Haileybury Observer,' it is said that in early life Lyall was apt, even more than other boys, and most boys are sinful in that way, to be seized with paroxysms of laughter at inopportune moments. This is credible, for though he gained control as he grew older, he used when in India to suffer cruelly from sudden attacks of the kind. The fact is, that though he disliked showing his feelings, and was much vexed with himself when he had done so, he was by temperament intensely emotional. To the end of his life his eyes would fill in spite of himself at a word or a note of music; and in the same way any little incident which happened to touch his sense of humour would make him for an instant speechless and rigid with the effort of self-command. When he was young it made some people

think him flippant, if not mannerless; but when I knew him he used to master himself heroically, and the fact that he could not help seeing the humorous side of a situation was one of the most delightful things about him.

Alfred Lyall finished his course at Haileybury in 1855, at the age of twenty, and before the end of the year he had sailed for India.

He always looked back upon his last three years in England as the least satisfactory part of his life. I do not mean to assert or imply that it was in any way discreditable to him. On the contrary, he was throughout an affectionate son and brother, and there are no signs of his having got into any sort of trouble. But, being young, he was bored by the society of a Cathedral town; and perhaps the discipline of the Rectory, though by no means hard, had become a little irksome to him. Some of his views and doings undoubtedly vexed his father.

There was in the younger generation of Lyalls, and markedly in him, a strain of restlessness with which the grave contemplative student was hardly fitted to sympathise. The younger and quicker-witted mother probably understood her children better; but she also was strict in her views of duty, and before Alfred Lyall left England there had been a certain amount of friction, which troubled him afterwards. That it occurred, and that he blamed himself for it, and that it never impaired the deep affection existing on both sides, are indications of character upon which it seems necessary to touch.

CHAPTER IV.

FIRST YEAR IN INDIA.

1855–1856.

Sails for India, November 1855—Voyage out—Nearly lost in surf at Madras—Lands at Calcutta, January 1856—Hospitably received—Elects for North-West Provinces—Passes examinations in languages—Lord Dalhousie and Lord Canning—Starts for North-West Provinces, May 1856—Travelling up country—Naini Tal in Himalayas—Posted as assistant magistrate at Bulandshahr, September 1856—Indian administrative system.

In November 1855 Alfred Lyall embarked on the P. & O. Company's steamship *Ava* for Calcutta, and his thirty-two years of foreign service began.

He had felt some depression at leaving England, as was natural, but this soon passed off, for in a letter written to his father from Malta he says: "At present I feel very well satisfied with my lot, and have lost all my gloomy ideas with my sickness." It is true that he disliked very much the monotony of the voyage and took every opportunity of going on shore. He was always restless at anything like confinement, and probably regarded life on shipboard very much as Samuel Johnson did. But he greatly enjoyed his visits to Gibraltar, Malta, and Alexandria; and, as always throughout his Indian career, wrote by every possible opportunity to members of the home circle at Harbledown, who, I may note, with the exception of his mother, seem to have written very

rarely in reply. At Pompey's Pillar a donkey gave him a fall by tumbling on its nose. "I thought of the death of Cæsar 'even at the base of Pompey's statue.'" Cairo he thought a delightful place, and he rejoiced to have got away from the *Ava*, which is perhaps not surprising, as she was a small vessel and he had been one of four in a cabin. Altogether his letters are cheerful and bright, and I notice that the rounded boyish writing begins to resemble the hand I afterwards knew so well.

At Suez the passengers went on board the *Bengal*, a larger and more comfortable ship than the *Ava*. Of course there were the usual theatricals, for which Alfred Lyall wrote a prologue and song, "both of which had a success that astonished myself, and actually gave me a low opinion of those who applauded, so indiscriminate and extravagant was their praise." He did not take part in the acting, but seems to have enjoyed the whole thing immensely. "I was behind the scenes, and in fits of laughter all the while." Thoughts of the old home, now so far away, evidently sadden him at times; but he tells his mother, "You need not think from this that I am out of spirits, for I certainly am not, and do not in the least regret my choice."

He first set foot on Indian soil at Madras, and was nearly lost in coming back to the ship.

The boat carrying the mails, which set off to the ship with me, was upset, and the mail-master and his two assistants drowned, or seized by the sharks, for they were never seen again. The mails floated on shore. Our boat was at the

same moment only 20 yards from them, and we were as nearly swamped as possible by the same enormous wave, losing our oars and drifting back to the shore half full of water.

Any one who has seen the surf at Madras will understand how narrow the escape was, but he did escape, and on the 2nd of January 1856 he landed at Calcutta, "having made a very good voyage of six weeks and one day." He was then just under twenty-one years of age.

At Calcutta he found all the hotels full, and had nowhere to go; but a merchant of the name of Hay, whose brother had been on board the *Bengal*, heard of his plight, and with true Indian hospitality made him welcome. At Mr Hay's house he remained some time, and was very happy. He was taken to a ball, where, he says, he enjoyed himself immensely; and his host lent him a horse, a white Arab, which rejoiced his heart. He writes to his father—

I enjoy myself very much now, especially when I ride on the crowded course in the evening, where the scene is very picturesque. The natives come out very strong in equipages and gorgeous domestics—that is, of course, the rich native merchants and a few princes, some of whom give balls.

Evidently British rule had already brought prosperity to the people of Calcutta.

Given his choice between remaining in Lower Bengal and going to the North-West Provinces, Alfred Lyall chose the latter, as the life offered more chance of adventure and promotion; and he immediately set to work to pass the necessary examinations

in Persian and Hindi. It was a momentous choice for him, as it meant that a year later he was to find himself at the very centre of the tract which was swept by the great storm of the Mutiny.

In his first letter from Calcutta he had written: "The Governor-General held a special council yesterday, and it is reported that it was for the purpose of settling the annexation of Oude." Perhaps the decision of that special council had more to do with the Mutiny than anything else. But all was quiet in India then, and no one dreamt of such a result.

Not many years earlier the fashion had been for young civilians to spend a considerable time in Calcutta, where many of them devoted themselves to amusement rather than work, and wasted money royally. It was considered rather a fine thing to have "turned your lakh,"—to have incurred a debt of £10,000, which often hung round a man's neck to the end of his service. Those days were over, or Lyall had the good sense to avoid outrunning his income.

He did, however, amuse himself, living in the Bengal club, and attending all the entertainments that were going on. A few weeks after his arrival he writes that he is "very well off out here at present, and like it very much." One of the Mysore princes gives a ball to Lord Dalhousie, and Lyall says there was a vast crowd. "I thought it very civil of him to give us a ball after we had confiscated his possessions." He sets up a buggy, and engages a

shikári, as he is "very fond of the shooting (snipe, quail, &c.)." But he soon begins to be "getting tired of parties," and writes of the death of a friend in England: "I shall be like Ulysses, returning after long years, and seeing only the shades of his old companions." He asks his mother to "send out M'Aulay's (*sic*) new volumes as soon as possible, and any other good new book." He also tells her, on the 22nd February, that he has had one letter from home since he reached India, and that he is keeping out of debt, having denied himself a riding horse. His first impression of the Hindus is not favourable—

> Their cursed religion, which forbids them to touch what I eat, and sets me forth generally as an abomination, puts an insuperable barrier between us. I abhor the sight of their painted idols, without a trace of beauty or any high idea in them. . . . My native tutor or munshi is a very enlightened man, and therefore a thorough atheist, as he says all enlightened natives are. I respect the Mussulmans much more.

He doubts whether his mother will care for his "crude opinions about India, but you can keep the letters and see whether my ideas change." They did change, very rapidly and very completely, as will be shown later.

On the 26th February he writes to his sister, Mrs Holland:[1]—

> I do not particularly want to go back at present myself, being quite contented out here, where I have something to do and enough of amusement. It was the having nothing to

[1] His elder sister, Sybilla, had married the Rev. Francis Holland, son of the well-known Sir Henry Holland.

do which was at the bottom of all my vagaries at Canterbury —I mean at home. The complete quiet and want of incident, and especially the intense respectability of every visitor, always worried me. . . . I never expect to rise above mediocrity here, as I have no interest, which is everything, and have not enough energy to do without it. Besides, I have no talents that would be of use out here, where a man of business gets on best, and where, as a very clever man told me a few days ago, any acquaintance with books is not the slightest use. I shall be happy enough in my own way, but I have mistaken my trade if I wished for any distinction.

By the beginning of March he had, to his own astonishment, passed the examination in Persian. "We are allowed eighteen months for the two languages. . . . I have worked very little."

I had a very good day's snipe-shooting yesterday: we shot eleven brace in two hours. I went out with Aitken, old Etonian. We were wonderful figures wading through the marsh, with enormous solar hats, Aitken only a shirt and trousers tied round with string, I in a dirty flannel shirt and a pair of originally very fine trousers cut short. . . . I daresay that in a few years I shall detest this country, as most do, but at present I like it.

Good Friday.—I hope you will always write, at least one of you, as it is not pleasant to see everyone around me opening letters when I get none. . . . I witnessed, as a member of the C.S., the arrival at Government House and the swearing in of Lord Canning. I do not much like his looks. Lord Dalhousie is a very clever-looking man. . . . I wish you would send me out Macaulay; and if you could get me Michelet's 'History of France' I would really pay you; or the last volumes of the 'Noctes Ambrosianæ.' All books are much dearer here, and they are most of them novels and very light literature.

" I have taken to contributing to the 'Delhi Sketch-book' (the 'Punch' of India), and if I could only illustrate my ideas with my pencil I really think I would set up a rival 'Punch,' as the 'Sketch-book' is very poor. . . . Remember, if you write, I always will.

I like the life very well, but I foresee that in a year or two I may easily become very tired of it. . . .

April 21st.—I think I get very few letters from home, only one by each mail, but I know we are not a letter-writing family. . . . My income is now 360 Rs., or £36 a-month, which is pretty good. In another month it will be 400 Rs. . . . I intend to make myself a good horseman if possible, and ride as much as I can. You will be horrified to hear that I am considered a good whist player.

Pray do not fill valuable space with admonitions as to expense in your next letter, as I assure you I do not intend to get into debt.

May 2nd. I have just heard that I have passed my second examination—in Hindi—and am thus speedily qualified for public service with a salary of Rs. 400 a-month. . . . You see what a farce these terrible-looking examinations are. I have learned to translate Hindi, and to write it "in an easy flowing style," as the Government manifesto requires, in one month, for I showed up blank papers to the examiners last time, not knowing a word.

The fact was that, though he had a bad ear for languages, and never took the trouble to master them, he was quick in picking up a sufficient vocabulary, and in catching the written style, which is what one wants for passing elementary examinations.

Four months was the extent of his stay in Calcutta, a place of which, notwithstanding his contented letters, he always retained an evil recollection; and

on the 10th of May, the very middle of the hot weather, he started for his long journey "up country." He intended to go first to Almora in the Himalayas, to see his elder brother Walter, who had married, and resigned his commission in the Army. On the 13th May he writes to Mrs Holland :—

I stayed twenty-four hours in Govindpore, where lives an unhappy civilian who governs all that part absolutely, not having a white face within forty miles of him. I met him as I changed horses, and he prayed me to stop and cheer his lonely bungalow for a short time. I stayed there Tuesday night, and in the morning assisted at his court in disposing of the criminal cases which were brought before us; but I often lowered my dignity by laughing, especially when one prisoner, being acquitted, fell flat on his abdomen before us and rubbed his nose on the floor in abject gratitude. . . . I shall leave this at 4 P.M., when the heat has gone down a little. At present it is something awful. . . . At home we always connect the idea of wind with coolness. Here the wind blows all day till about five in the evening, and it is literally as hot as the draught from an oven if you put your face close to it. I never could have believed that wind could have such a burning breath. It almost takes the skin off my face. . . . I travel about 90 miles in the 24 hours, stopping usually from 10 to 4 in the day. Somehow or other I do not dislike it as yet, though it is solitary work. . . . My driver is a bearded man from the north of India, who has an enormous sword and a big trumpet with which he proclaims my passage through the villages. . . . He supplicates restive horses to go on, and calls them "great prince" and "mighty Lord," then, as that usually fails, he suddenly attacks them furiously with his stick, and curses the horse's family and relations in the most awful manner. I sit inside with a cigar, having a loaded revolver to support the big sword if necessary.

It must have been a curious experience to the boy just out from a peaceful Kentish parsonage, and so he felt it.

I cannot cease wondering to find myself, A. C. Lyall, in a wretched little hut in the very heart of India, surrounded by a tawny population, among whom it would seem that I have not the slightest business. The whole thing seems absurd on consideration. I also do not understand why I am in very good spirits, though physically uncomfortable. . . . I passed through the wildest hills last night that I ever saw, nothing but jungle on every side. There was a beautiful moon, so I could see a long way, and looked out sharp for tigers, which are common enough in these hills, but I saw nothing but the places built for hunters to watch for them. The Sonthals[1] have been heard of near here, they routed the few soldiers sent to disperse them, killed the Magistrate's horse, and actually hit that functionary in the back with a poisoned arrow, which has not, however, done any great mischief. I was told this by a venerable native, who seemed much horrified at their shooting at a civilian. I told him that it was certainly the most atrocious of crimes.

It seemed an amusing matter to him then. He was soon to see more stirring scenes, when the civilian, as well as the soldier, had to fight for his life in earnest. The places he passed through, Bareilly, Futehghur, Cawnpore, were all to be sadly familiar to English ears before many months had passed away.

On the 20th of May he was at the foot of the Himalayas, and, mounting a pony at daylight, he rode up to Naini Tal, which nearly thirty years later

[1] An uncivilised tribe which had been giving some trouble.

was to be his summer headquarters, when the young civilian had made his way to the top of the official ladder and become Lieutenant-Governor of the Province, ruler of forty millions of men. In 1856, though he noticed that it was not marked on the map, it gave him a pleasant welcome.

The change of climate was wonderful. The day before I had been utterly exhausted with intense heat, and that afternoon I found myself in an English climate, and dined before a blazing fire.

Who that has felt it does not remember the delight of that change, from the sweltering heat of the plains to the pines and rhododendrons of the Himalayas?

"And then the scent and whisper of the firs,
The crimson blossoms on a deep-blue sky,
And the cold fragrant mountain air that stirs
Among the brown rock grasses silently."

At the neighbouring "hill station" of Almora, Alfred Lyall saw again his elder brother, and enjoyed a few weeks amid some of the grandest scenery in the world, scenery which filled him with delight and "sheer amazement." And no wonder, for once seen it dwarfs the mountains of Europe for ever. His "joining time" from Calcutta to his first post was liberal, and gave him a considerable margin to spend in the mountains. He was for the time thoroughly happy. "Somehow," he writes to his sister,

I already feel at home all over India, and have none of that downheartedness which I used to feel in England when

going to a place where I knew no one. Everybody is so much more cordial and easy of access out here, and when I look back upon my experience of English society I think that at home you are horribly frigid and formal, and that such things as hospitality and friendship are very rare in your over-civilised country. I am sure that people care more about each other, and are more ready to give mutual assistance, out here than at home.

I rather like the primitive way of travelling here. . . . I do not object to the long journeys (measured always in India by days), and I feel a sort of contempt for what is called distance in England. In England the genus "traveller" is extinct, everybody is now a passenger. Out here a passenger is unknown. . . . According to all accounts India is changing rapidly; I am just in time to see the old face of the country, but the next generation will find everything Europeanised.

In this letter there is for the first time a remark which occurs more than once in Lyall's letters—"I never read over anything I write." It was noticeable in later years how careless he was in this way, even with letters of some importance. The moment they were finished, he used to moisten the gum with his finger, fasten them up, and despatch them, rarely if ever keeping a copy. Perhaps he feared that if he read them again his fastidious sense of style would make him rewrite them; perhaps he did not care, and felt confident in his own readiness of phrase. However this may have been, his carelessness was one of the reasons for the charm of his letters. There is never any sign of elaboration about them. They are always fresh and spontaneous, just what he thought and felt, not what after consideration he

knew he ought to think and feel. But in later life he was remarkably careful about stops, for which as a boy he had small respect.

He was not wholly wasting his time, for, as he told his father, he was working hard at the vernacular, and especially learning to read the "shikast," or broken character, in which court records and other documents were written. He was writing verses too. "I send you some morbid rhymes which I made in bed, being low-spirited because the mosquitoes were biting me." The rhymes were not kept with the letter, and one cannot say what they were. It was not yet time for the "Land of Regrets."

The monsoon had now come on, and nothing can be imagined more dismal than continuous wet weather in a small Himalayan hill-station, with the clouds drifting through the sodden tree-tops, and a ceaseless drumming of rain on the wooden roof. Lyall began to get very tired of it. He solaced himself with reading Carlyle, "whom I consider to be a shining light, though I guess my father does not approve of him. I have also read with much weighty approbation Sir W. Hamilton's essay against mathematics as a study." And in spite of rain and mosquitoes he was still content with India, for he writes to his brother James, "You will like this country better than England, so come out here as soon as you can."

His letters do not show precisely when his leave ended, but in early September, after a short time in the mountains to the east of Almora, he was

posted as Assistant Magistrate of Bulandshahr, the High Town, a station about forty miles from Delhi, and here his Indian work began.

A young civilian, after passing in the languages, was ordinarily posted as Assistant Magistrate at some station of the kind, the headquarters of one of the "districts" which form the administrative units of India, to learn his work under a senior officer. Districts varied in size and population; but it may be roughly computed that one of them was equivalent to a fair-sized English county, and numbered nearly a million inhabitants. To keep the district in order, administer justice, collect the Government revenue, look after the roads and bridges, and perform innumerable other duties which in England devolve upon a variety of local authorities, there were two English officers of some standing, the "Magistrate" and the "Collector,"[1] supported by one or two young civilian assistants. Sometimes there would be a medical officer in charge of the civilian population, and if there were any troops in the district there would also be a few military officers. Possibly there might be a judge, who would do the more important judicial work of two or three districts. In any case, except at a few stations where there was a considerable garrison, the total number of European officials in a district was very small, often not more than half a dozen.

Four or five of these districts were grouped together under a senior officer called a Commissioner,

[1] The two offices were afterwards thrown into one.

whose charge was a "Division," and six or seven Divisions, or more, formed a Province under a Lieutenant-Governor. A Governor-General with a small Council, aided by various Departments, supervised the whole of India.

It should be remarked that India did not all consist of Provinces under Lieutenant-Governors, but it would be useless to enter into local differences. Throughout British India the district was the administrative unit, and the district officers were the backbone of the administration.

Such was the simple structure of our Indian system,—a system under which two hundred millions of people were governed by a few hundred English officers, aided by a larger number of native subordinates. Bulandshahr, a district of the Meerut Division, in the Lieut.-Governorship of the North-Western Provinces, was a fair specimen of a country district of those days.[1]

Here, in the autumn of 1856, Alfred Lyall began

[1] If an English reader who knows nothing of India wishes to have a general idea of the situation there in 1857, let him suppose the tables turned, and that one of the Indian races, gaining command of the sea, had established, a century or two ago, a dominion of the same magnitude in Western Europe. There would then be an Indian Governor-General with headquarters, say, in Rome, and a summer residence in Switzerland. Such countries as France, Germany, and Austria would each be ruled by an Indian Lieutenant-Governor, more or less subordinate to the central government in Rome. An Indian army of less than 50,000 men, with a force four or five times as large composed of Europeans officered by Indians, would represent the military strength of the paramount power in the whole dominion. The British Isles would form a Province under a Lieutenant-Governor. Ireland or Scotland would be a Division under a Commissioner. Kent or Devonshire would be a District under a Magistrate and Collector.

to learn his work, and during the delightful months of the Indian "cold weather," when the hot winds and the rainy season were over, and the sky was blue and the air cool and bracing, he settled himself into the official saddle. It was well for him that he got to work when he did, and acquired some knowledge of his district, for 1856 was the last year of peace in India, the last of the old order. His experience, short as it was, proved of much use to him when, in the earlier part of the following summer, the great tornado of the Sepoy Mutiny suddenly burst upon our countrymen. By that time he had learned to understand the local language, and to speak it with fluency; and he had gained some confidence in dealing with the people about him.

CHAPTER V.

BEFORE THE MUTINY.

1857.

Life at Bulandshahr—Natives and missionaries—Liking for sport—Miscellaneous reading—The Holi festival—Horses and guns—Death of his uncle, the Dean of Canterbury—Soldiers and civilians in India.

At the beginning of the fateful year 1857 no Englishman in Bulandshahr, or indeed anywhere else, had the smallest conception of what the next few months would bring forth. It is true that Henry Lawrence and Henry Durand had both warned Lord Canning that there was an uneasy feeling in the sepoy army; but no one anticipated immediate revolt, and the letters of the young assistant magistrate naturally show no signs of apprehension. On the 4th of January he writes to his mother—

You have none of you sent me a letter by this last mail, . . . and I had almost determined to leave this mail blank in return, but have thought better of it. We spent our Christmas pleasantly enough, sitting outside the door of the tent in the evening by a large wood fire, enjoying coffee and tobacco. To-day is my twenty-second birthday, and I have drunk my own health with much fervour, but there have been no other rejoicings. Also I have just finished my first year in India, and have only twenty-one more years to pass, which is encouraging. I superintend the jail,

and on the anniversary of my year in India it became my duty to set free a man who had undergone a year's imprisonment, so I consoled myself for my lot by drawing comparisons.

He goes on to tell his mother about his establishment of servants, fourteen for a total expenditure of £6 a month, and remarks about the low-caste water-carrier and sweeper—

Their respective names (the names of their offices) mean "one who belongs to paradise" and "prince." I asked a learned native the reason why these outcasts had such grand names, and he told me very seriously that as in this life and the next they were doomed to be perpetually despised, and to perform the lowest offices, it had been considered humane to smooth over their lot by giving them grand titles as a consolation. My informant was a Brahmin. . . . Is it not a curious and simple idea? . . . This Brahmin was too cautious to tell me his idea of my future destiny, but I am afraid that he had no doubt in his secret mind. All the well-to-do people of the district sent us presents on Christmas Day, knowing that to be our great festival. I was overpowered with oranges, Cabul grapes, and lumps of crystallised sugar, dried raisins, &c., all of which, except the grapes, I distributed royally among my household, like a great lord and protector of the poor, as they told me. The villainous butler had seized them all for himself, under pretence of keeping them for my use, but I made him disgorge.

A few days later he finds himself obliged to start suddenly for the "hills" again, to help his sister-in-law, who was alone, her husband having found it necessary to go to England. Such inconvenient family calls he always met with the most ready unselfishness. The journey was troublesome, and

expensive for a young man on small pay, but he did not hesitate to undertake it, and he writes to his brother-in-law, Francis Holland—

I cannot help owning that . . . I am in uncommonly good spirits about it, now that I am starting, as there is a smack of adventure and enterprise in going up to the mountains at this season, when every one has left them on account of the cold; and I expect to shoot a bear or so.

Mr Holland had apparently been giving him good advice, after the manner of English friends, about natives and missionaries; and Alfred Lyall answers—

As for your remarks about the treatment of natives, I can assure you that I treat them with special civility, and like them very much, and, I think, am generally liked by them. . . . What do you mean by calling me "an European tax-gatherer"? You may take back your proverb into your teeth . . . and think yourself lucky that I have not got you within the limits of Bulandshahr. I would show you that besides gathering taxes, my business was to fine, imprison, and inflict stripes upon disorderly and obnoxious characters. . . . As for the missionary work, I do not believe that it will have any effect until the missionaries change their habit of life. They are now to be seen in comfortable houses with their wives and children, and every luxury. No religion was ever founded in this way. . . . The Oriental especially requires some outward appearance of inspiration, and all great propagators of religion have had such appearance. While the Rev. A. B. first gets a nice house and garden with appurtenances, and then sallies out comfortably equipped to lecture to the natives, all his purity and sincerity will be of no avail. If he were to clothe himself in camel skins, and rush wildly about denouncing the idols of Brahma, he might have a chance, because Orientals do not sneer at all this, as we

should do, and are much influenced by outward show of earnestness and self-devotion. . . . I could write whole pages on the subject.

This is plain speaking from a boy of two-and-twenty to a clergyman of the Church of England, but that was Alfred Lyall's way; and it may be noted that his views on the subject of Protestant missions remained practically unchanged to the end of his life.

A few days later he writes to Mrs Holland—

I am now again in the mountains, and enjoying myself much, though I was rather disgusted at being obliged, as I thought, to come here. I should like you to be transported from your fusty little suburb to the verandah of this bungalow, so that you might have five minutes' look at the scene. Halfway down the mountain below me the clouds begin, and stretch in white fleecy waves far away, looking exactly like a milk-white sea, out of which here and there rocks covered with trees seem to rise. These are the tops of the lower hills —that is, not above 4000 feet or so high. To the right is a great defile filled halfway up with white clouds, so that it seems a river winding into the great sea through a rocky pass. The whole horizon is bounded by the snowy ranges. . . . In these fine clear winter mornings one can sit for hours and stare solemnly at the mountains, and feel that the time has been properly spent. . . . But now there is such shooting. Pheasants and partridges of various kinds, woodcock, snipe, and deer, and perhaps bears.

He goes on to talk of his brother James, then at Haileybury, who was apparently distinguishing himself rather at athletic sports than in the examinations—

I think a good deal of his winning pewter pots myself. . . . My father is so entirely devoted to literature that he considers everything else as mere waste of time, in which I never could agree with him, as it is all the same in the end, so long as our life is passed happily. A superior, well-read person is not more happy than the common herd, as the superior person calls the rest,—not but what Jimmy is rather a superior person in my estimation, having the one faculty which I consider to afford more enjoyment than any other—that is, a sense of humour and a strong appreciation of the ludicrous. When I meet a person thus gifted, I instantly attach myself to him, or rather seize upon him, with a conviction we shall get on well together; when a person has none, I never get beyond a general esteem for him, as I know we shall not suit. . . . George Barlow has a splendid broad appreciation of fun, and we used to go into perfect convulsions together in the very street; besides, it did one good to hear his jolly open laugh. . . . M. (his sister-in-law) has got a sort of homely humour, which is now and then very good. A man brings her up cabbages now and then for a present, and it is much suspected that he steals them from his master's garden. To-day he brought up a very bad one, whereupon M. opined that he must have stolen it in a great hurry, which, combined with the man's complacent face, . . . sent me into a fit of laughter. . . . I doubt whether it will sound funny to you on paper. But I was considering in a very melancholy strain some time ago that I have laughed very little since I have been in India. . . . The natives of this country do not laugh, except when they have gained some advantage. They cannot really laugh at all.

This is not quite fair. Natives of India, especially northerners, will at times laugh out very heartily. But it is true that some other Oriental races, notably the Persians, have a readier sense of humour. The Indian, as a rule, shows a tinge of melancholy.

As for your husband's and my father's anticipations of my getting on and doing wonders in the service, I do not care enough about the matter to disquiet myself on the subject. I don't think I have a particle of ambition in me—at least, I am never made uneasy by any such feeling. It may seem curious to you, but I find that the more I read poetry and books like Carlyle, and other imaginative works, the less care I have for what is called my prospects in life. Such works are like opium to me, sending me off into pleasant dreams. I think that it must have been once much the same sort of thing with my father, who, I suspect, studied until he lost all his young ambition.

Lyall remained a few days longer in the mountains shooting, in spite of rain and mist, and at this time he evidently enjoyed the sport. He gives his brother James an animated and accurate account of shooting the Himalayan pheasant with the help of a spaniel—

Soon I hear an agonised bark, perhaps 100 or 150 yards off up the hillside; at the same moment comes the whirr and scream of the springing pheasant. I finger my locks involuntarily, to see whether they are at half-cock, never having lost that habit. My eye catches a bluish-grey bird with streaming tail, and a white tuft on his head, come dashing like lightning past me, just skimming the tops of the trees in the ravine. I aim at least two feet before it, and the bird either whirls head over heels with tremendous impetus to the bottom, scattering a cloud of feathers in the air, or goes clucking past me and up the opposite bank, making that peculiarly aggravating note which a pheasant always seems to make when you miss him—a half-triumphant, half-indignant cluck. . . . It is grand to see an old cock collapse in a cloud of feathers, and fall smashing some 50 yards past you into the deep ravine below.

He did not long retain his liking for sport, but these extracts show that as a very young man he was not without it.

By the middle of February he was back at his post, and wrote to his mother that after his long journey up and down the mountain-sides, and in a "palki" to the banks of the Ganges, "it was intensely inspiriting and delightful to me to get on my Arab, and gallop off across the sandy plains" to his home in Bulandshahr, thirty-five miles away. There he found his mother's letter of the 10th January awaiting him.

The communication is wonderfully speedy in these days. I don't think that I should care to have it improved now. Once a fortnight is quite often enough to hear from home, and if we could hear oftener the zest would be somewhat taken away from the pleasure of receiving home letters.

I am very much obliged to you for 'The Saturday Review,' the missing number of which, inquired for in my last letter, has come to hand. I think it is by far the best written paper that I have ever seen, and I take credit to myself for discerning its merits from the first number, which came out just as I left England. It is just the publication required out here to keep one "au fait" as to all that goes on in English politics and literature. . . . I suppose you won't get me Voltaire's works, but I want his Philosophical Dictionary. Do not send Dicken's (*sic*) new serial. . . . My private opinion is that he is able to write nothing but broad farce, and that he has been going backward ever since 'Pickwick' came out. I am growing a moustache, as I consider this solitude a fine place for the experiment. . . . We are vaguely apprehensive of a storm brewing on our North-Western Frontier, and I think we shall have some trouble in the Persian direction soon.

But there is not a sign of any apprehension about the storm that was brewing so much nearer home.

On the 19th of February he writes to his father a letter which shows the kind of reading affected by him at two-and-twenty, and shows also a touch of the gentle malice which sometimes perhaps carried him a little too far in his dealings with the serious-minded philosopher. After remarking that his father always answers his letters, he goes on—

Have you got my Herodotus at home, and my Shakespeare in one volume? I thought also that I had brought out 'Don Quixote' with me. One volume, too, of Gibbon is missing. You used to remark that I had a peculiar predilection for reading whatever was not required, and neglecting that species of literature which might concern me at the time. In accordance to this characteristic, I have lately been indulging in all sorts of desultory reading, although the law examination is impending, and I hardly know an Act. I was still striving to enable myself to comprehend and appreciate the metaphysical parts of the 'Agonistes,' when a native pedlar brought some old books to my door, and, on condition that I bought some volumes of the 'Sporting Review,' he threw in Hume's 'Essays' as a makeweight. This was just what I required, and I was soon deep in the essays on Necessary Connexion and the like. I think Hume's reasoning wonderfully clear and ingenious, and am bound to say that I incline to his side even on many of the points where you are his adversary. There are one or two things in your book which I should like to be explained. . . . I doubt your assertion that the idea of number does not exist to brutes, and I do not see how you know or have any right to suppose that a hen does not miss the eggs you take from her. If she does miss them, what can she do more than go on with those that are left? Again, why have you enumbered such an

astounding jumble of trades and professions in your definition of "non-productive classes"? Have you any reason for bringing forward postilions and chimney-sweeps more than twenty other sorts of professions? And why have you excluded the members of the Church? I always supposed that economists reckoned them as forming a vast non-productive body.

This, it must be allowed, is rather hard hitting; and if, as seems probable, it began a year or so before, in conversation, one can understand that at first his father may have found it a little difficult to answer patiently.

My reading now is an absurd jumble of different subjects. I take up classics now and then, just to keep me from utterly forgetting them. I wish you would enclose your 'Principles of Truth.' Also I want De Quincey's 'Essays' and 'Opium-Eater.'

The absurd jumble was in any case fairly good reading for his age. He goes on abruptly to his daily work—

We have caught a large band of wandering gipsies in the district accused of all sorts of crimes, and I have been all day helping to examine them. They are a curious people, have no settled residence, no caste, and no particular religion, and describe themselves by the appropriate term of "Khana badosh," which is a Persian word for vagrant, meaning literally House on back. . . . They cannot tell whence they come from, and don't care whither they go. All other natives repudiate them.

These people, whom every district officer in India knows, were just the folk to interest Lyall, and enlist

his sympathetic study. He always had a touch of George Borrow in his composition. He writes to his sister a few days later describing another incident of his work, the despatch of £10,000 from the district treasury to Meerut, and the counting of the money bags. Over this he nearly comes to grief, trying to superintend the count, but in reality dreaming, so that a bag goes astray.

I made another ludicrously unpleasant exhibition to-day. The office people informed me that to-morrow was a holiday, upon which I, with an expression of condescending interest in the habits and customs of the country, inquired whether it was a Hindoo or Mussulman feast, and sacred to what deity. Conceive my confusion when they answered that it was one of the Sahib's own high festivals, but they did not know exactly to what deity. In fact, it turned out to be Ash Wednesday. My ignorance is excusable enough, as there is nothing here to mark one day from another all the year round, but the pious heathens were evidently scandalised. I felt ashamed too, as, independently of religious grounds, it is by no means the "ton" in Eastern lands not to be fully acquainted with the rites and feasts of one's own religion. . . .

Do you ever read poetry now? . . . I am always spouting verses to myself here alone, my favourite piece at present being that fragment in Peacocke's 'Maid Marian,' "A damsel stood to watch the fight," which has always seemed to me the perfection of a musical ballad. . . .

I wish you would have your picture taken and send it out to me. Other people have all their relations in photograph. . . . I asked my mother long ago to send her picture, but I knew I should never get it, though I would have paid for it myself twice over. . . .

The air . . . is getting that rich odorous scent which the summer brings to it. . . . In the night, as just now, it is

delicious. I go out and look up at Orion, and think that he is shining on me and on you perhaps walking down from Harbledown, just as he shone on the old Greek sailors two thousand years ago, and on the ancient nations who worshipped the host of heaven. I like to look up at him and think that I do in reality see the shadowy outline of the mighty hunter. . . . At any rate, look at him on the next opportunity, and see how grandly he reclines with his belt and sword.

Soon afterwards he describes how he had to make a local inquiry into an alleged robbery in the house of a Brahmin, a friend of his, who was supposed to have lost a hundred pounds' worth of goods, carried off through a hole in the wall; and how the Mussulman police officer and the Brahmin had a fierce dispute over the story.

I rather suspect my friend to have made the hole himself in order to have the fun of setting the police officer on a wild-goose chase.

He goes on to tell how

. . . a man had cut off all the four feet of his enemy's ass, out of spite, and as there is no cruelty to animals' law out here, I am going to imprison and fine him for "wanton destruction of property," which I consider to be an ingenious rendering of the law. Also I am persecuted by a little gipsy girl, whose father, a juggler, is in custody. She will suddenly rush out and tie herself into a knot or stand on her head . . . in hopes of melting me thereby. . . . The great feast of the Holi, in celebration of the vernal equinox, is coming on in a few days. The whole population throw a sort of red dust at each other, or mix it with water and squirt it in each other's faces. Everybody marries his little son to his neighbour's little daughter, and the betrothal is celebrated by awful music

all night. . . . In short, this is the primeval feast of the spring harvest; and they have no doubt celebrated it for thousands of years just in this way. You perhaps do not know that in this fertile country we have two harvests, one in the spring and another in the autumn.

The study of popular customs, always congenial to Lyall, afterwards became one of his favourite pursuits, and supplied him with the facts which enabled him to deal so faithfully with some of the charming theories of Max Müller and Frazer. In March there was still not a sign of any coming trouble, and Lyall had nothing to tell his mother, so he fell back on domestic details, how he had been obliged to dismiss his "victualler," and had bought fifty live teal to supply his table in the hot weather, when other food would be hard to get. He rejoiced at the prospect of his younger brother James coming out. "There is nobody with whom I laugh so much, except George Barlow, and I want somebody to laugh with very much." James was advised to come to the North-West Provinces for various reasons, among others that the climate was better,

and the people here are immensely superior, morally and physically, to the Bengalees. I would back fifty of these fine, tall, up-country men against a thousand of the inhabitants of Lower Bengal. . . . The language, too, is much finer, and is half Persian, and thus in some degree classical, whereas the Bengali tongue is a mere provincial patois, which I would disdain to speak, for if I must learn foreign languages, I like to know fine languages, with some literature attached. Also, the country up here is historical, the scene of the great Mogul conquests, and the cities are really worth seeing.

He was evidently beginning to feel something of that real interest and pride in the manly race about him which his poems afterwards expressed so strongly.

You seem to have taken my account of the desolate condition of my rooms and the want of crockery as if I were seriously complaining, whereas I only meant it as a joke on myself. . . . I am not in the least afflicted by my poverty in that respect. . . . I prefer getting other things instead. I have only one chair of my own and but three teacups, but I have two horses and four guns. In a secluded spot like this I consider my horses and guns as more important than a well-furnished pantry.

A properly constituted boy of two-and-twenty could hardly feel òtherwise. He goes on to laugh at his own sporting prowess—

I went out shooting for the last time this season about a week ago. Seeing a fine buck antelope, I got off my elephant and made for a bush on the right of the deer, the elephant marching parallel with me, but so as to cut it off on the left. The cunning old buck slowly retreated, but came on a man whom I had sent round behind it. He stopped and held a council of war with himself. Suddenly he made up his mind (the buck I mean) and charged straight at the gap between me and the elephant, where I never thought he would dare to come. I was intensely excited, and let fly both barrels as he passed me. The first ball hit the ground under him, the second whistled over him and struck with a dull thud the leg of the elephant, who was staring solemnly at the scene. The wrath and fear of the elephant were most ludicrous, just like a respectable old gentleman who is quietly looking on at a street row and suddenly receives a lump of dirt in his face. This elephant, an enormous animal, lifted up his trunk with a scream of anger and bolted with his driver

over hedge and ditch and high standing crops with his head in the air and trunk erect. . . . Knowing that a bullet will no more go through an elephant's hide than a popgun ball will go through a door, I was not alarmed, but sat down and shouted with laughter to see the huge brute run. However, I left off laughing when he again appeared on the horizon, being brought back to me by the mahout; as elephants are known to have as keen an appreciation of practical jokes as men. . . . So at first I felt a little uneasy as he came looming through the field towards me, and I gave him a wide berth. But, like all animals, he was not revengeful, and even allowed me to examine his hurts, which consisted in a slight abrasion of the outer part of the hide where the ball had hit him. When I got home there was much cutting of jokes at my having bagged my own elephant.

The whole thing was like Lyall, never really a good shot, and never the least disinclined to laugh at himself, though he disliked ridicule from others.

On the 30th March he had heard through a newspaper telegram of the death of his father's brother, the Dean of Canterbury. When he left England in 1855 he had felt that he should not see the Dean again, and he writes to Mrs Holland—

I remember that my taking leave of him last November year was the only thing, of all the partings that took place then, that reduced me to shedding tears. It almost now makes me do so when I recollect how I walked home through the Cathedral yard in the dark, sobbing and crying almost in an absurd manner, for I have noticed in myself that when I do begin to cry I become quite hysterical and cannot leave off. . . . Perhaps you can imagine how we look over the list of deaths which are telegraphed every fortnight from England. We always get them in the summary of news that comes before the letters and papers.

He goes on, little thinking of what the next few months were to bring forth—

> I am sorry that John Lee is coming out here as a cadet. I would not be an officer in the Indian Army if I had the slightest chance of subsistence in England. Wretched pay, nothing to do, and no prospect of a retiring competence except after about forty years' service. . . . The red coat out here does not carry the prestige with it that it does at home, . . . the natives have long ago found out that all the power rests with the black coats. The only thing that serves to reconcile me to banishment [this is a new note with him] is that no finer position can well be desired than that of a civilian. We have enormous powers for good and evil.

He proceeds to contrast the two positions, very much to the advantage of the civilian. He was right enough as matters then stood, but before his day soldiers had done great things in India. There is no part of the world where the tactical capacity of the British officer, and the genius of the race for sheer hard fighting against odds, have been more often and more strikingly shown. Now a time was coming again when the power was to pass from the black coat to the red, and Lyall was to learn, and acknowledge, that the soldier's profession was the most honourable of all.

CHAPTER VI.

THE MUTINY.

1857–1861.

Visits to Meerut and Delhi, April 1857—Rumours of disaffection in Sepoy army—Pugnacious villagers—Outbreak of Mutiny, May 1857—Massacre at Delhi—Risings in Bulandshahr—Lyall shoots mutineer—His house burnt by rebels—Escapes to Meerut—Joins Volunteer Cavalry—Horse killed under him—Restores order in Bulandshahr—Measures of punishment—Natives fighting among themselves—Lyall posted to Shahjehanpore, May 1858—Severe fighting—The 42nd Highlanders—Disarming the district—Dulness of peace times—Posted to Pilibheet, February 1860—Tiger-shooting—Influence of Mutiny on Lyall's character and writings.

THE first of Alfred Lyall's letters which gives any warning of what was about to happen is one written to his mother on the 7th of April 1857. He had been obliged to go into Meerut, the headquarters of his division, to pass an examination, and had taken the opportunity of returning by Delhi to see the imperial city. He stayed there a couple of days, but did not see much, "as it was very hot, and I am never very ardent about seeing things that every one is expected to visit." He went to look at the Great Mosque, but

there was an immense flight of steps to be ascended, and a good many true believers sitting at the top. I was alone, and dared not face their disapproving countenances, which I knew would glare upon me as I laboured up the steps, although they of course would not dare to do anything but look savagely at me. Besides, I hate going peeping about in places where you are considered an intruder.

Hardly a month later the Europeans in Delhi, men and women and children, were being brutally massacred by the true believers, and the Great Mosque had become the centre from which was preached the holy war of extermination.

The letter goes on to criticise at length an edition of Bacon's 'Essays' which his mother had sent him, and then to touch upon the condition of the sepoy army. "You will have seen in the newspapers," he writes, "that a great deal of mutinous disaffection has appeared among the native soldiers," and he points out how "fearfully dangerous to our Indian empire a general mutiny would be." He then tells her the well-known story of the chupattis, or oatmeal cakes as he calls them, which were made in every village of the district by the village police, and passed on—

> No one knew, or would tell, whence they came, or whither the cakes were to go, or who gave the order. Each man had received the awful command from the next village. . . . They seemed to obey with a sort of superstitious awe, which prevented any questioning or reasoning, as if a curse would follow any neglect. No one has been able to make anything of this. I am apt to consider the phenomenon as a sort of fiery cross sent over India to warn all to be ready. . . . In this instance I really think something is about to happen.

But the letter passes to various unimportant matters, and finishes up with the sentence, "My contemporaries are marrying very fast. Shall I follow their example?"

By the time his mother received this letter the

English papers had in all probability published the news of an outbreak at Meerut, and of the massacre at Delhi. The anxiety in Harbledown as to the fate of the much-loved son must have been intense.

Meanwhile Alfred Lyall was working away without any immediate apprehensions. But the whole country was then full of arms, and his district was no exception. It was therefore thought desirable to disarm some of the little forts and fortified villages with which the district was studded, and he was employed on this duty. On the 24th of April he describes the process to his father, and then turns to a totally different question, his own money affairs—

In spite of your good advice I do not yet intend to save a rupee, but to enjoy my life for the present as much as I possibly can. Why should I save? My pay will go on steadily increasing, so that if I wait for five years I can marry without the least anxiety on that score. Besides, I won't pass all my life in hoarding up rupees. I declare I would just as soon throw the surplus of each month into the Ganges, which is now flowing under this balcony.

This is petulant, to say the least of it; but he was perhaps getting irritated by repeated admonitions.

As late as the 3rd May, a week before the outbreak, he writes to his mother a long letter describing his life: a gallop at sunrise; work from seven till noon; then breakfast, and a torpid period until about half-past five, with the house shut up against the blazing heat; then a plunge in the swimming-bath. The letter contains not a word about the disaffection in the army, but gives a sympathetic description of

the fights between different villages, and between landlord and tenant, during the harvest season—

I never saw such a pugnacious race as these men. They are mostly tall wiry men, and each carries a club five feet long, generally loaded with iron at the end. The better class wear scimitars, that is great heavy curved swords. . . . They work themselves up into fearful passions, and then go to work, utterly regardless of any legal consequences. . . . Down in Bengal the landlords bully and grind the wretched cultivators. Up in these parts it is rather the tenant who bullies and defies his landlord, sitting night and day over his little stock of wheat, in company with two or three other grim villagers who may have joined their stores to his. I can see their watch-fires from my verandah all over the plain at this moment. I take much interest in this primitive style of life, and could go on writing about it for ever.

By the time he despatched his next letter the storm had burst. The native troops had risen in the great military station of Meerut, forty miles away, murdering many Europeans, and had marched off, unpunished, to Delhi. In his own station about fifteen English people had rapidly collected in the Magistrate's house,—mostly travellers, who had come in for protection. All were armed, and kept incessant watch, lest any body of insurgent troops should march on Bulandshahr. It is curious and instructive to read Lyall's long accounts of what followed during the next few days. The native population did not rise against the white man, but the moment they thought the white man was powerless they rose against each other, the rival castes and

villages plundering and fighting in all directions: the Hindu Gujars raiding the Hindu Jats, and the Mahomedans raiding all Hindus impartially—while the English Magistrate and his young Assistant rode about from village to village followed by a few native subordinates and fighting men, vainly trying to keep order and punish the rioters. In the course of their operations they had some promiscuous fighting, and Lyall saw for the first time men killed and wounded. Indeed he did more, for he was obliged himself to pistol one man, a sepoy mutineer, who had shot one of his native followers, and was fighting savagely. To a boy of his age the excitement and action were of course delightful, and after a week of it he writes to his father: "I really think that I have hardly ever enjoyed myself so much." His heart is naturally full of rage against the mutineer sepoys, who had butchered English women and children; but, "all the other natives," he says, "are just like a set of mischievous schoolboys whose master has met with an accident. They turn to, and fight and rob each other, whereby the whole party is easily dispersed."

At the time he evidently hoped that order might soon be restored—

I wrote you a long letter yesterday. . . . As I suppose you are very anxious, I write again to-day to tell you that our prospects are looking up. We expect reinforcements of staunch troops to arrive here to-morrow, when we shall be safe, and have leisure to come down on all the rebellious villagers, who are getting worse and worse. There is nothing but robbery and murder all over the district, but they dare not come near us at the station. . . . We do not fear the

villagers in the least. . . . You can understand what a state of fury we all are in, when I tell you that the mutineers performed atrocities on the women and children of the Europeans in Delhi, which can only be compared to the worst days of the French Revolution. . . . I am at a loss to account for the fact that I am in excellent spirits. Just as I had written the word "spirits" there arose a fearful row, and I jumped up and substituted a revolver for my pen, and rushed to the door. A vast volume of smoke was seen rising above the town, so the Magistrate and I got on our horses and galloped down. We found that an enormous stack of wood had caught fire, and was blazing furiously before a strong wind. Luckily the stack was on the leeward edge of the town, or the whole city would have burned. We could do nothing to extinguish the flames, as we do not keep fire-engines in India, so we retired to the roof of a high house, and stood contemplating the burning city. I proposed to the Magistrate to send for a fiddle as his Rome was burning, but he would not see the fun of the thing.

This comparatively satisfactory state of affairs was soon over. On the 21st of May came news that the troops at the next station had risen, and as the detachment of sepoys in charge of the Treasury at Bulandshahr belonged to the same regiment, the look-out was bad. All the Europeans thereupon left for Meerut, with the exception of the four civil officers, who remained at their posts. They had with them thirty irregular troopers, who seemed staunch, and the detachment of sepoys had as yet remained quiet, so they hoped at least to save the treasure. The hope was fallacious, for in the evening

we had loaded the treasure on carts, the sepoys were in order round it, and the troopers in the saddle, when all of

a sudden the van of an immense body of armed villagers appeared through the trees not 200 yards from us. Then began a wonderful row. The sepoys fired at them in defence of the treasure, and drove them off, but some burst into the town where they began murdering and plundering, while the rest swarmed over the country in every direction, invading every house and garden like locusts.

Two of the civil officers, Turnbull and Lyall, with a few troopers, pursued the first body and cut up a considerable number, driving them out of the town, while the townspeople also fired at them from the roofs, and killed all who fell into their hands; but on returning from the pursuit, Turnbull and Lyall found that their own houses were in flames, a strong body of villagers having attacked from that side.

I could see them dragging out my furniture and smashing open the boxes, &c., &c. We could not charge them, for at this moment the officer commanding the sepoys came up to say that they had turned upon the treasure. We went up to them, and found that they had picked a quarrel with the troopers, whom they threatened to shoot, whereupon the said troopers rode clean away. Then we desired the sepoys to march off with us, bringing the treasure. They marched out of the gate, and then coolly took the opposite road to that which we ordered, and thus walked off with the treasure.

So ended the gallant attempt of the civilians to do their duty. Joined by the officer of sepoys, but deserted by every native follower, Turnbull and Lyall saw that the game was up; so they turned their horses' heads towards Meerut, and made a dash for the open country, past their blazing houses. The village bands were swarming round them, and the forty-mile

ride was a perilous one; but favoured by a very dark night the three Europeans managed to steer through the various parties they encountered, and got safely to Meerut. They had lost almost everything they possessed; but owing to the comparatively good conduct of the troopers and sepoys they had escaped with their lives, and in that they were luckier than many others.

In Meerut Lyall found the other two civil officers from Bulandshahr, who had cut their way through a body of villagers and escaped.

His stay in Meerut was short, for before his arrival a regiment had been sent off to Bulandshahr, and was expected to arrive in a day or two. So three of the four civilians rode back to their station with a small force of native troopers. They found the station completely sacked and burnt, and all the houses in ruins. "I have lost everything that I had in my house, furniture, crockery, electroplate, and above all every one of my books." He gives a list of his possessions, most of which he had just bought, but adds: "However, I do not much mind the loss, as it is wonderful how well I get on with a horse, a revolver, a double gun, and a shirt, without requiring anything else in these fighting times." The outrages inflicted by the armed villagers upon innocent people had stirred his wrath. "These cowardly villains," he writes, "have robbed and murdered hundreds of travellers and others," and he sets to work to punish them with stern satisfaction. "The villagers rose in thousands, and sacked a large native town within ten miles of us yesterday, killing

men, women, and children. . . . These men have not the slightest excuse for all this horrible outrage." So it was all over the disturbed country; and it is worth remembering that directly our power seemed to have collapsed the worst sufferers were the natives themselves, who were slaughtered in thousands. No doubt we suffered too, and Lyall writes: "What wretched work this is! so many men whom I knew well killed in this miserable manner by mutineers. I am always repeating to myself Homer's 'ἄλλ' ἐγγυς θανατος και μοιρα μελαινη.'" But the number of natives killed by the insurgents was immeasurably greater than the number of white men.

The work of punishment, though begun, was soon interrupted, for a neighbouring landholder, the Nawab Walidad Khan, succeeded in getting some insurgent sepoys to come out from Delhi, and with their aid laid a trap for the English officers which very nearly succeeded. Decoyed into the town, they were suddenly attacked with musketry and grape, and nothing but the speed of their charge saved them. They got clear with the loss of a few troopers, but had again to leave Bulandshahr and stay at a place half-way to Meerut, watching their old station, and listening to the boom of the guns at Delhi, where a small British force was attacking the mutineers. Meanwhile news of rising after rising, and massacre after massacre, came in from the stations all round, and Lyall's heart grew hot within him. "I was greatly struck," he writes to his father, "with the appropriateness of the first lesson of last Sunday,

which told how Joshua went up against the royal city of Ai and smote the inhabitants with the edge of the sword. I intend to draw my morality from the Old Testament for some time to come." But the royal city was to hold out for three months yet against our small army, outnumbered by three or four to one. The vengeance, when it came, was not wholly insufficient, but it was long in coming, and Lyall in common with all the English in India chafed fiercely at the delay.

Meanwhile, the Bulandshahr district having got completely out of hand, he had gone in to Meerut, and had attached himself as a trooper to a party of Volunteer Horse. With this party, numbering about forty men, he joined in several rapid expeditions against bodies of insurgents, who were burning and plundering all the peaceable villages in the neighbourhood. Some of these expeditions were not carried out without sharp fighting, and Lyall thoroughly enjoyed himself. In the course of it all he came to change his opinion about Hindus and Mahomedans.

There is always something very laughable to me in the way these Hindoos will walk off with their enemy's property the moment that he is down. Plunder always seems to be their chief object, to obtain which they will perform any villainy, whereas the Mahometans only seem to care about murdering their opponents, and are altogether far more bloody-minded. These last hate us with a fanatical hate that we never suspected to exist among them, and have everywhere been the leaders in the barbarous murdering and mangling of the Christians.

This view he repeats at intervals in his Mutiny letters, and, in a sense, it remained with him to the end of his life. He had in later years many Mahomedan friends, but he always seems to have regarded the one religion as far more hostile to us than the other. A good illustration of his feeling in the matter is given by his short poems entitled 'Studies at Delhi, 1876,' where the attitude of the two faiths is sharply contrasted. He often said that he hoped to see the expulsion of the Turk from Europe.

In one of the fights of the Volunteer Horse Lyall had a narrow escape. They were pursuing the beaten enemy through some fields of sugar-cane, when "a man suddenly sprang up from the high cane under my horse's feet, and made a furious blow at me with his tulwar. I parried it just in time, or he would have cut me in two. My horse gave a tremendous plunge, and his second blow descended on her flank, inflicting a mortal wound." . . . The mutineer was killed by an English rifleman, and Lyall goes on—

> I escaped thus unhurt, with a sword bent by the blow, but my poor white mare, who was the admiration of the whole troop, and my special pride, was so fearfully wounded that it was necessary to shoot her immediately. I shed lots of tears over her, and altogether made an exhibition of myself, but I had come quite to love the poor creature, and can hardly bear to think of her now.

Still he enjoyed the fighting, for in a letter written not long afterwards he expresses his pleasure at find-

ing himself suddenly brought back to the dark ages, and placed in a country which has relapsed into a state of barbarism—

> I can realise exactly what the old life of foray and plunder must have been. I can understand how easily men get accustomed to and like this sort of life. . . . Every man does what is right in his own eyes; villages are fighting against villages, Hindoo Rajputs against Mussulmans, and petty chiefs starting up in every direction. The Rajputs are the best fighters among the Hindoos, but they generally get beaten by the Mahometans, whose worst enemies must confess that they are the most warlike of all. There is something in their religion that makes warriors of them.

He comments upon the fierce hatred shown to us by the Mahomedans, and puts down the whole Mutiny to this. Then he tells a story of a fight between three thousand Hindu Jats and two thousand Mussulmans of his district, "horse, foot, and artillery," who are routed by a sudden charge. Their leader had been trying to collect revenue. The victors in this affair are apparently on the best of terms with the English civil officers, "and I never was so delighted as when the Hindoo leader, a tall, grey-bearded veteran, who had fought in the Cabul campaign on our side, recounted to me how he led his brotherhood on to that desperate charge." And this was at the very height of the Mutiny, which is so commonly, and so wrongly, regarded as a national revolt against the British.

At the same time Lyall describes how curiously

timid these pugnacious villagers were against white men—

> The natives have acquired a sort of awful fear of us (I mean the villagers), and will not fight us at a hundred to one; but they are no cowards for all that, and fight desperately among themselves. It is very curious, but I have seen a man, after beating off three or four of his fellow countrymen, drop his sword and fly at the sight of a single European.

Lyall adds that, of course, the regular mutineers are different; but all readers of Mutiny history must have been struck by the apparently impossible odds against which our victories were usually won; and without this "sort of awful fear" of the white man it is difficult to account for them. No doubt the leading of the British officer had much to do with it, and the want of good leading on the other side; but there was more in it than this. Any one who wishes to understand the feeling of the native towards the white man, as described by a native, should read a little work, 'From Sepoy to Subadar,' which throws a curious light upon the subject.

A month later Lyall writes to his father—

> Delhi has fallen, after a bloody fight, at which unluckily I was not present, being laid up at Meerut. I am quite well now, and shall start for Delhi to-morrow morning at 4 A.M., in order to enjoy the pleasure of seeing the imperial city of the Mussulmans in ruins. I have left the Volunteer Horse, as I am ordered to join the "movable column" which is forming at Delhi for the purpose of sweeping the Doab (Do Ab—two waters), or country between the Ganges and the Jumna, down to Agra. I am afraid that we shall see no fighting of any im-

portance, as all the rebels are pouring across the Ganges. . . . I have just been made a Joint Magistrate. Tremendous promotion!

His service with the movable column was short, for the first move was on his own station, Bulandshahr, which was held by a force of mutineers and fanatic Mahomedans. Here he saw his first fight on a considerable scale, with artillery on both sides. Knowing the ground thoroughly, he was able to do useful service, and found himself in the thick of a cavalry action, in which the opposing horsemen fairly met hand to hand. The end of it was that the enemy were driven across the river, but, to his extreme disgust, not pursued.

But [he writes very sensibly] I own that I know nothing on military matters, having already, in the course of these little campaigns, discovered the excellent wisdom of measures which I had on my own judgment declared to be utterly absurd. . . . All the little skirmishes of the last four months seem child's-play to this sort of work. Artillery is such a fearful machine of destruction. I fear it most heartily, far more now than ever, only I have learnt that it is of no use to bob one's head.

At Bulandshahr Lyall was left by the movable column, which marched on to other fields, and Lord Roberts, who was attached to it, describes in his book, 'Forty-One Years in India,' the anxiety which was felt for Lyall's safety. "We left Bulandshahr, and said good-bye to Lyall, on the 3rd October, feeling that he was being placed in a position of considerable risk, thrown as he was on his own resources, with

general instructions to re-establish the authority of the British Government." But he seems to have felt no anxiety himself, and set to work without delay to restore order and deal out punishment. In this last duty he was severe; and those who knew him only in the latter part of his life will perhaps be surprised to hear it. They will not easily imagine him as a "hanging judge." But even then, severe as he undoubtedly was, knowing well the criminal folly of any weakness in such times, he was not pitiless. "A great many of the enemy were killed," he writes, "and their skeletons still lie all over the place, picked clean by the dogs and vultures. Also the people about were for the first few days continually bringing in wretched mutineers, wounded in all sorts of disgusting ways, whom they had dragged from some hole or hedge where the poor creatures had lain hid." That is not the tone of the merciless butcher. It is true that he also writes: "We are exercising unsparing revenge and hang people daily," but his letter shows that at the very same time he and others were getting abused for checking indiscriminate punishment. The unsparing revenge and hanging were for murderers only, and mainly for the murderers of natives. Few if any white men had been killed in the district.

Through it all his love of reading crops out—

I have now not a book, and have learnt to do without them, but still I should like something. I wish you would send out all the new books worth reading. I will pay the bill, and beg you not to economise on my account. . . . I want also some poetry. Can you get me pocket editions of Shelley and

Keats, also a little Homer, and the poetical works of Ernest Jones?

Many Englishmen of the present day would perhaps be puzzled to say what were the poetical works of Ernest Jones. It is possible that Lyall was attracted by the title of one of them, "The Revolt of Hindustan."

As to the murderers who were being executed, he writes—

I have somehow got lately a strange fear of what the old Greeks call Nemesis, so I just do my duty in hanging them, and nothing more. For this same reason I never insult or curse them, . . . but am particularly polite and deferential to them up to their last moment, insomuch that some here have been deluded into the idea that I was going to let them off. . . .

My father warns me against engaging in skirmishes, as I am inexperienced in war. It is true that I know nothing of regular warfare, but five months' irregular skirmishing has taught me something, and I am very well armed. Besides, everybody must fight in these times. No one can sit looking on and plead the inexperience of a civilian. . . . I know something about sword exercise, having learnt it at Haileybury (do you remember how displeased my father was at having to pay the bill?), otherwise I should probably have been cut down when my mare was killed; and you know that I am pretty well accustomed to firearms. But I will not boast, fearing Nemesis. . . . I only regret my books, which can never be replaced, and whose loss will have ruined all my ideas of keeping up my classics and French. I must give all that up and sink into barbarism. I feel the change already. In old times I was miserable without something to read. Now I hardly ever wish to look into a book, which is in some degree fortunate, as I have none. . . . I used to study

regularly before this. . . . Pray remember me to . . . and beg her to pardon me for not writing to her. I will do so when all this work is over, when I shall have washed my hands and made myself morally decent.

For the rest of the year Lyall was out in camp, watching the river frontier of his district, as a large force of mutineers was only a few miles away, and constantly threatening an attack. The whole force in the district consisted of forty white men and four hundred Beluchis and Afghans, so this was rather anxious work; but his letters are happy and confident. He had as one of his companions another Godmersham boy, an officer in the army, and they evidently got on well, at one time making an unsuccessful attempt to capture a mud fort, at another marching through the night towards an enemy ten times their number; Lyall, according to his own account, convinced that they were going to commit suicide, but nevertheless cheering up when they had lit a fire, and soon "immensely merry over a cold peacock and gin and water." He tells his mother that he will not take any money from her—

Money is no use up here, and there is nothing to buy. . . . I want warm clothes and cannot get them, and, worst of all, my tobacco is running short. . . . At present I travel with a tent, chairs, and a bedstead, and do not require anything else. I am rich in articles of real value at the present time, as I have four horses, a rifle, and a revolver, besides a whole armoury of swords.

A special law had given magistrates unlimited authority for a year, so he was in the position of a

despot, and he laughs at the way the natives of the district treat him—

Also my youth and general politeness point me out as a subject susceptible to adulation. . . . They are lost in admiration of my desperate courage, and relate stories to each other in my presence, illustrating the manner in which I am supposed to have mowed down the enemy. They shout with laughter at the idea of any one standing before me in the fight, or treat the idea when put forward by another with contemptuous pity.

It is a faithful picture. What Englishman dressed in a little brief authority has not winced under similar flatteries? They are in accordance with the custom of the country, and the people of the country would think it mannerless to omit them.

Then bodies of mutineers appear in the neighbourhood, and the little army marches away, Lyall being left in charge of the station. He fortifies the jail, and mounts the old guns over the gate in case of attack.

If the Mussulman patriots therein confined get up an *émeute*, I shall be under the melancholy necessity of turning the guns inward. . . .

People in England dispute whether this is a national revolt or not. In my opinion a national revolt, in the European sense, is unknown in India. The villagers and towns either side with some neighbouring potentate, . . . or more generally, and almost universally, side with no one at all. They are delighted at being relieved from all government whatsoever, and instantly set to work fighting among themselves. Every man of enterprise and a little influence collects his clan, and plunders all the weaker villages around him. In particular,

he strips the money-lending traders. . . . Money, cattle, corn, clothes, everything is taken, and the fat, well-to-do trader remains a half-naked blubbering wretch, who beseeches Government to get him back his bonds, and is horribly vindictive when his turn comes round again.

Towards the close of the year, Bulandshahr having become comparatively quiet, Lyall applied for service in the neighbouring province of Rohilcund, where many Europeans had been massacred, and there seemed to be a chance of further fighting. He was getting sick of mere punishment.

It is curious to see how soft-hearted many of us are, I among the number, when we really come to putting men to death. Every one cries for vengeance, and abuses those in power for not carrying it out, but I have seen many, who talk most bloodily about shooting and hanging, become utterly unable to act when they saw a wretched villain before them begging for his life.

To his father he writes that an example must be made of the mutineers—

However, I am pretty sure that if the people in England who are screaming for wholesale slaughter were obliged to do the work *in propriâ personâ*, they would very soon become disgusted with it. . . . Queer thoughts about the divine right of revenge come into your head when you really have to send a string of fellow-creatures out of the world, at least it happens so with me. However, I have made up my mind, and can superintend executions with very little emotion.

At the same time he writes to his mother again refusing offers of money, and describing an expedi-

tion with some Afghan horsemen to punish a rebel village—

I think that I could get a short leave when all this shall have finished, though I really like the excitement so much that, as far as regards myself, the country may never be settled. This sort of situation improves everybody, and promotes good fellowship and unselfishness, besides showing clearly what every man's real character is.

The beginning of the next year, 1858, found him still in Bulandshahr, for though his application for service in Rohilcund had been accepted, that province was in the hands of the enemy. Meantime he writes to his brother-in-law, Holland—

I am really ashamed at being complimented by you and others at home upon my "personal courage." I really and truly am not peculiarly gifted in that way, not the least more than any one else, and am nothing in comparison to many. I have been perfectly astonished at the bravery of some of the professional soldiers, who really seem to care for nothing.

He repeats his opinion about the missionaries—

Christianity will never flourish here, at least a Protestant form. It has not fire enough. Ministers sent out to convert the heathen with a decent stipend and a comfortable house will never do any good. If you will give us a religious cry to respond to Allah Akbar, as in the olden time, and organise a sort of crusade, you will make some impression, but the orthodox method will not pay. Every nation seems to me to form its own phase of religion, according to its own peculiar idiosyncrasy, and it is idle to think of ingrafting the rigid and simple faith of the Saxons upon the Hindoos. . . .

I would not be at home now if I could be transported thither. I should become bored in a week. This is a fine

stirring life in these times, and I do not care how long the disturbance lasts. I am sitting now in the verandah of a house on the high bank of the Ganges, and every now and then look up from my work to watch the movements of a picket of enemy's cavalry who are clearly visible on the other side. It is now beautiful weather,—you in England have no idea of what clear, bright, dry days compose an Indian winter in the north. I had sooner be here than down in St Dunstan's, where it must be cold, damp, and raw, with not a vestige of an enemy on the Harbledown heights.

Soon afterwards he tells his mother that the enemy had brought five guns down to the bank of the river "and began to pound us." As some of his men were under fire, and as he "felt conscious of being horribly afraid of the cannon-balls that come ricochetting along the sand and raising clouds of dust," he determined to conquer his faint-heartedness and ride down—

The first sight I met was one of our men lying on the ground with the back of his head carried away by a shell. I own that, having nothing to do, I crept under the shelter of a boat, and lay down on the sand as the balls whizzed over my head. However, seeing Knight (his Godmersham friend) walking about the open plain as if nothing was going on, I emerged from my hole and joined him. . . . I am honourably mentioned in the despatch of the Bulandshahr fight.

He writes to his father—

I am still out with the camp on the Ganges, but have no more warlike adventures to relate, and am beginning to fear that I am come to the end of my fighting experiences. Instead of that, I have descended to the lower work of arresting criminals and confiscating the property of rebels.

He is sent to make a sudden descent upon the fort

of a Mussulman chief, and succeeds in surprising it, but feels very much disgusted with the work of confiscation, and is evidently so worked upon by the old retainers and the women and children, that he promises to speak a good word for the head of the house, who would certainly have murdered him if victorious—

> He has committed simple rebellion. If he had been in any way concerned in the massacres I would have been hung myself before I could have said a word for him, but mere rebellion is a gentlemanly offence. . . . Our native subordinates are making hay while the sun shines, and reaping a rich harvest from the fears of those who are "shaky."

He is sad at this time because of his want of clothes. "I am ashamed to go into Meerut in the ragamuffin attire which I wear now. . . . You may laugh at my caring about such things, but I have always done so, and now I feel my sense of propriety shocked by baggy trousers and sack-like coats." A year's campaigning does play havoc with one's wardrobe, especially in India, and no doubt he was by this time in a fairly disreputable condition. But his self-respect probably suffered more than it need have done. Though he did not know it, he always looked his best in loose clothes and a "wide-awake," and only spoilt himself when he conformed to regulation.

A letter to Francis Holland, of March 1858, gives a ghastly story of the murder of two English ladies, and one of the same time to Mrs Holland describes how quickly all the villagers in his district have

settled down, though they had been "fighting desperately among themselves during the whole of last summer, . . . in reality every man was fighting for his own hand. However, it was grand fun."

The hot weather found him still out in camp, and resentful at the way people were beginning to talk in England—

As I always prophesied, the excitement being over, the English people have taken a strong turn in the direction of clemency. This is all very well, but some are going farther, and are beginning to denounce us all as dastardly murderers. Well, I do not so much care now, as we have had our innings, but I detest that cheap philanthropy which prompts men to write letters from their Clubs to 'The Times' protesting against unnecessary severity.

He goes on to point out how the Mahomedans had deliberately planned and tried to carry out a war of extermination, and how they had made conversions at the point of the sword—

I know a great many half-castes who abjured their religion during the terror of the rebellion, and I myself spoke with one man who positively declined to return to Christianity.[1]

To his mother he tells the story of a friendly Rajput landholder just across the river—

About ten days ago a swarm of villains suddenly fell upon him, stormed his little mud fort after a desperate fight, and killed him and all his brethren to the number of 50 souls. . . . However, I got out a small boat and succeeded in

[1] "Look at that half-caste clerk in his tears, whining aloud the name of the prophet."—'Theology in Extremis.'

rescuing his wife and little son, 18 months old, the sole remnant of the family. Is not this a nice country, where such things are of daily occurrence? . . . James . . . says 'you are anxious as to the discomfort in which I may be. Let me assure you that I am very comfortable as I am, and wish that these stirring times may last.

Soon afterwards he hears that his father has refused to pay for some books ordered by him, among which was Voltaire, and he says it was a mistake that the bill was sent to Harbledown. "But," he writes to his mother, "I consider that I have a right to read whatever I choose, and that it is not such an awful matter to possess Voltaire as you seem to think." He proceeds to explain at length, and finishes by carrying the war into the enemy's country. "I am ready to lay any wager that . . . and my father himself have both read every word of Voltaire. Just ask them."

Before the end of May 1858 he had got his wish, and was posted to Shahjehanpore, in the still disturbed district of Rohilcund. From there a few weeks later he writes to his mother—

Your letter of June 23rd reached me to-day. The description of hayfields and tea out of doors in the long summer evening was almost too much for me. Just fancy the contrast; I was lying with a swelled and aching face in my bed in a little stifling room, with a native doctor putting on leeches. . . . And now it must be about midnight, and I am sitting up because I cannot get a wink of sleep. It is rather trying, but somehow I do not feel those low spirits that I used to feel before this war broke out. . . . You see we are all playing a certain part in the grand drama of

'India Reconquered,' and it is something to feel that one is taking a share in events that are world-famous and will become historical, so that I can bear many discomforts in order to see the play well played out.

A large body of rebels had assembled twenty miles away, and there was some chance of an attack—

However, you need not fear for me, as the fighting days of civilians are over, and I am not such an idiot as to thrust myself among regular English troops, where I should only be in the way. Those were grand times! I have never enjoyed myself half so much as I did from May to December 1857.

The rebel army has come a little nearer, . . . but its movements are so undecided that no one thinks that the mutineers will make up their minds to come on before the end of the month. . . . In the meantime we are going to have races to-morrow, and my Arab is to run for the Ladies' Purse, although, I fear, there are no ladies within fifty miles. . . . This is almost the anniversary of the assault upon Delhi. This time last year I was out with the Volunteers within 20 miles of that city, and heard every morning the breaching guns thundering against the Cashmere Gate and Moree bastion. I do not know anything so exciting as the distant sound of artillery, and at that especial time we knew that all our lives depended upon those guns.

At this time he was hoping to get another step in promotion and a considerable increase in pay—

I think I could get it now if I chose to take an appointment in Oude, but I have uneasy scruples as to the way in which we got that country. . . . What an enormous number of natives must have perished since May 1857. Those whom we killed are not half the number. Everybody has been killing his neighbour, and they have not left off yet in Oude and Bundelcund.

He gives various cases of the kind, one, for example, in which two men murdered each other's brothers, and then rushed into court with petitions, each hoping to get the other hanged—

I put both into prison, explaining that I intended to hang both, or neither, whereupon the relations of both sides took care that no evidence should appear, and the case was quashed. I am always glad to see these cases settled quietly, for I very much doubt our right to punish men for actions committed during the year of utter confusion which ended in May 1858, and during which time our rule had been completely subverted in Rohilcund. These men never attempted to do such things under our sway, but they thought that we were all gone, and reverted to the fashions of their forefathers.

He was to see and share in at least one more sharp fight, for in October 1858, the rainy season being over, a large body of rebels advanced into his district, burning villages, and he was sent as civilian officer with the troops—"political officer," as the Indian phrase is. He found the enemy strongly posted, and expected a tough resistance—

But our artillery was too much for them, and they evacuated their position before the long gleaming line of bayonets had got within charging distance.[1] I was quite astonished to see them bolt, for they, the rebels, fought far

[1] "As our fathers fought we fight,
But a sword and a matchlock gun,
'Gainst the serried line of bayonets bright,
A thousand moving like one."
—*Rajput Rebels.*

In this instance, however, the rebels were largely composed of well-armed sepoys.

better last year. . . . I galloped to the Afghan cavalry with orders to charge and pursue, and I found their officers riding up and down in front of their men, alternately swearing at and praying to their wild troops, who were like a pack of eager hounds when the game has broken cover, and could not be kept in order. The word being given, the whole body set off with a chorus of furious shouts and yells of delight, and we all went helter-skelter through the thick jungle in a manner which would have horrified the Horse Guards. Emerging from the jungle we found the place covered with flying sepoys, who were darting across the clear spaces left between the fields of high Indian corn, and diving into the cover in every direction. This was just the style of warfare which our Afghans understood. They scattered all over the country, cutting down, shooting, and spearing the fugitives in a perfect ecstasy of delight. It was not, however, always done with impunity. I saw one desperate sepoy turn and await his pursuer with one knee on the ground, taking a deliberate aim. The Afghan gave a shout and charged down upon him, striking his enemy over the head, and receiving the contents of the musket in his stomach. "Ya Allah," the accompanying Afghan gave a howl of vengeance, and buried his sabre in the sepoy's neck with a slish that set my teeth on edge.

The action was completely successful, and the rebels were driven out of the district. Lyall remarks that the rebels have lost heart, and comments on the misconduct of their leaders, who "always run away and leave their men to be cut up." This, no doubt, was one of the main secrets of British victories against hopeless odds, — the difference in leading. England had much cause then, as she has had much cause before and since, to thank God for the "stupid" British officer.

Lyall himself was now "in delightful heart" again, with the return of cool weather and excitement. A few more skirmishes, and the rebels had all been chased out of the district.

I have a lurking sympathy with the Oude rebels, and the great landholders of the country. . . . The Mussulmans never could subdue the great Hindoo chiefs of Oude, and the Rajputs still hold the land as they held it 2000 years ago. There are one or two rank rebels, but penitent, from Oude, who live here under surveillance, but come and see me sometimes, and I like to talk to them about the eternal state of siege and petty warfare in which they have been used to live.

He notes as a curious instance of the rapid way in which the country becomes disturbed and settles down, that on the 30th October he is shooting duck and teal close by the place where he had seen the fighting on the 8th.

In November he writes to his father—

The more pleased to see your handwriting because you so very seldom write to me. . . . *Agonistes* found his match in the insurgent Goojurs, who offered him up to the gods of Hindooism in company with a hecatomb of classics, and that poor little edition of Dean Swift which used to figure in the dining-room bookshelves at Harbledown. I wish I could get more books, but I have none, except Voltaire, who arrived safely, *diabolo volente*. . . . This life is very enjoyable to me, and I never regret that I gave up King's College for India. I regret it less and less every year, as I get accustomed to the country and the people. In spite of all that has happened, I take immense interest in the natives of India, and like to be constantly among them. . . .

He tries to learn about the tribes, religions, and social customs of the Hindus. The Mahomedans, he says, are bloodthirsty fanatics, and he would like to join in a regular crusade against them in any country where Christians dwell. . . . Meanwhile "I have begun many letters to newspapers, journals, and notes of events, but I never can finish them, as my only leisure is in the evening, when I am much too tired for any serious work."

Before the end of the year he was camped with some English, or rather Scottish,[1] troops, on the banks of the Sardah river, at the extreme north of his district, watching some rebels who were still "out," and it is evident that he was at last getting tired of warfare. He writes to his sister that there has been a bloody little bush fight, and that he hopes it is the last in those parts—

> The sepoys fought us like demons, and nothing but the wonderful pluck of the British soldier carried us through. You women at home are quite right to think much of the Army, but you would think much more if you really saw them fight. I do not believe that there is any one in the world who can come near a good English regiment in fighting. Officers and men go in at the foe with a cool gallantry that is beyond words. You should have seen the two companies of the 42nd Royal Highlanders charge into a thick jungle under a shower of balls, and drive five hundred sepoys before them at the bayonet's point. And you should have seen the

[1] Though almost a pure Scot in blood, Lyall had no jealousy about the use of the word "English" to denote all the inhabitants of the United Kingdom — "les Anglais." A good substitute for it is often difficult to find.

dark jungle, trampled and bloody, with dead men lying in every ghastly attitude.[1] . . . I think it is all over now, I mean the war, and I hope so, for it is now nineteen months since I saw the first shot fired in anger. . . . I have been campaigning ever since, and I am heartily tired and sick of it. Last year I felt very bloodthirsty, and was foolish enough to express my feeling in letters to people at home who could not possibly sympathise with me, but, you know, they should not have touched women and children if they expected us to treat them according to the rules of civilised warfare.

A few days later he writes to his mother—

The 42nd Highlanders . . . are, without exception, the best regiment that I have ever met, and I shall be very sorry to part with them, after living with them almost as one of themselves for two months. The men, too, are such fine handsome fellows, and I never felt more the horrors of war than on seeing five of them lying dead and bloody upon the grass after the fight of the 15th. Last year all this sort of thing came as a matter of course, but this time I had made up my mind that we had done with fighting and death scenes. . . . I heard the first shot fired in anger on the 15th May 1857, and saw the first sepoy killed. . . . I shot him with my revolver, and now I fervently hope that I have seen the last dead sepoy on the 15th January 1859. . . . I fear that I shall soon be transferred from this station, but I do not care, as I am the most restless of mortals, and cannot live for a few months in one place without longing for a change. I want a place where active outdoor work is required, and where the strict rules of legal and official routine are less rigidly observed than in these old provinces.

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[1] "Mid the broken grass of the trampled glade,
Where bayonets met and the fight was sorest."
—*After the Skirmish.*

He was, in fact, contemplating an application for some appointment in Oudh, "if they are wise enough to introduce a simple and summary form of government into that much injured country."

Soon afterwards his younger brother James, also in the Civil Service, came up from Calcutta; and after three weeks in camp Alfred Lyall rode up with him to the mountains to meet their elder brother Walter. For a night all three slept in a little tent together, and then Alfred rode back thirty-five miles to his camp on the Sardah. There he misses James badly. "We always talked up to late at night, and for quiet ruminating conversation over a camp-fire James is an unequalled companion, especially to me." The two brothers, though they differed in character, and in many of their views, had in common a keen sense of humour and a deep interest in the people of the country. At this time Alfred Lyall felt very strongly about the annexation of Oudh, which, as I have said before, had perhaps been one of the main causes of the Mutiny. He writes to his mother about "the scandalous cant with which we tried to whitewash" that proceeding, and says it has entirely uprooted all trust in our good faith among natives. One can imagine how he poured out his indignation to his brother over the camp-fire. Later in life he saw reason to modify these views, which were in great measure unjust; but they are worth noting as an indication of his sympathy with native feelings, and of his independence of thought.

My belief is that he had at this time been con-

siderably impressed by the opinions of his kinsman and friend de Kantzow,[1] an officer of the Indian army, who was then serving in the same part of the country, and had greatly distinguished himself. Lyall admired him as "a very original character, and far superior to ordinary young England. . . . His great beauty is his almost feminine gentleness of manner which covers the most daring courage." De Kantzow's knowledge of the vernacular, and of native ways, was extraordinary; and he realised the native point of view as few Englishmen did. While he served most gallantly against the mutineers, he was filled with an intense and almost passionate sense of the wrongs under which they believed themselves to be suffering; and this chivalrous spirit led him at times, perhaps, to be rather hard on his own countrymen.

Lyall goes on—

> I always find myself diverging into Indian politics, for I am interested heart and soul in the affairs of the country, and am always thinking of the probable fortunes of our Empire, and trying to conceive it possible to civilise and convert an enormous nation by the mechanical processes of the present times by establishing schools and missionary societies. Also, having civilised them, and taught them the advantage of liberty and the use of European sciences, how are we to keep them under us, and to persuade them that it is for their good that we hold all the high offices of Government? Well, it does not much matter to Harbledown.

Pity that it does not matter more to "Harbledown" —to the homes of England. It must matter much to them all some day whether England understands

[1] Now Colonel de Kantzow.

India or not. Considering that almost every family in England has probably, at one time or another, sent a son or a daughter to India, and that for centuries a large proportion of the wealth of England has been drawn from her Indian trade, few things are more remarkable than the ignorance and indifference shown by Englishmen in general with regard to Indian affairs.

Alfred Lyall was expecting some photographs and other presents brought out from home by his brother. "I want to see the photographs above all. . . . Your face," he writes to his mother, "I was not likely to forget," and he promises a picture of himself if possible; but the only photographer in the North-West Provinces had been murdered by rebels in a village near Meerut.

In a letter to Mrs Holland a little later he explains the position of a civilian in India, and especially of one in the field with troops, managing to a great extent the intelligence department and the commissariat, and the relations with natives generally. "As is usually the case with civilians, especially when working with military men, I get no praise if all goes well, and am certain to be the scapegoat if anything goes wrong." That is too broadly stated; but his experience of service in the field had been instructive, and proved of great use to him twenty years later, when, as Foreign Secretary, he had to control the work of the political department during the Afghan War.

His camp life with the troops ended at the be-

ginning of the hot weather of 1859, and he went back to Shahjehanpore to read for his law examination, which he found very irksome after his long freedom from book-work. But he was specially exempted by the Government in consideration of the judicial and other services he had rendered during the Mutiny, and was much relieved thereby. "It is now a great thing to know that I shall probably never have to undergo another examination until after my death."

He deplores his want of leisure for reading and study. "This is a drawback to Indian life." But he goes on—

> Life in India is just now very dull. There is a sort of reaction after the excitement of the last two years. . . . As far as I am concerned, as long as I am unmarried I care very little what may happen; it would be a very bad thing, indeed, that could be worse than twenty-two years' routine work in an office. . . . I am now amply provided with books, thanks to my father's great kindness. . . . I feel very much the kind self-denial of my father in sending out to me his own classics. I wish he had not done so.

When the hot weather really sets in he is building a house, living meanwhile in native quarters in the town, and, as usual at this time of year, his letters are less contented. He often notices this himself, and writes to his mother: "The effect of the climate and the seasons upon the tone of my letters must seem almost laughable to you. But so it is. In the cold weather I never wish to change my lot, in the hot weather I fancy that any position is preferable." The fact was that in the hot weather he was more

or less ill with fever, toothache, and other ailments. Even so he was in no hurry to leave India. "I should be perfectly contented if I had a prospect of being able to quit the country after ten years." Now that he had learnt to speak and understand the language well, and to feel that he was no longer dependent upon native subordinates, he liked his work. "The administration of justice and finance is certainly the most honourable profession of all," he writes, "barring that of arms." But the North-West Provinces had become now too settled for him, and he tells his mother he is going to apply to be posted to Central India, and go right down to the wilds.

What made you send the 'Contes Morales' to me? Their flavour is rather flat after Voltaire. For St Simon I am very much obliged. It is just the sort of book that I want, an inexhaustible fund of light reading. But of all the books which you have sent out, de Tocqueville on the ancient *régime* interests me most. The European counterpart of an Indian civilian was the Intendant of a Province under Louis XIV., XV. He had exactly the same sort of duties: magisterial, executive, and financial, and held his province *en tutelle* exactly as a civilian holds his district, interfering in every sort of affair from the highest to the lowest, and corresponding about everything with a centralising Government. Lord Dalhousie's centralising policy resembled strongly that of the late French Government, and led to much the same results when a strain came upon the carefully fabricated machine of administration.

This is thoughtful comment for a man of four-and-twenty, who has just spent two years in the stress of the Mutiny. It is to be noted that his liking for

French literature did not incline him to the French side in other respects. He had just heard of the Austrian defeat at Magenta. "I am sorry for it," he writes, "and hope that the Teutonic kingdoms will unite and exterminate the French invaders. I think they will do so in the end."

In July he writes to his father—

I am sorry to find that my occasional expressions of misgivings as to my choice of an Indian career have made you somewhat uneasy. You have certainly nothing wherewith to reproach yourself if I come to grief, for you were always opposed to my wish for India. . . . In long solitary journeys on horseback I have often argued over the question to myself in my mind, and have always come at last to the conclusion that I was much happier out here than I should have been at home. I am just as restless as Walter. . . . I am sure that I should have become terribly sick of college life. . . . But this work in India is becoming very dull, and I look forward with dismay to long years of peaceful office life.

He goes on to discuss Indian political questions, and asks for his father's ideas upon the subject, adding, with what reads like a touch of gentle irony,—

You are quite mistaken in assuming that your letters, if filled with dissertations, would be less amusing than if you confined yourself to the chronicle of local events.

You have no idea of the delightful spirits produced by the first cool mornings which come in the latter half of September. With me these first whiffs of the cold season always produce a violent impatience of inaction. . . . I did not come out to India to live a domestic life in a quiet station, and I shall cut adrift from Shahjehanpore next year. . . . Racing is certainly the pleasantest sport that I know, in its pure state. I mean

when it simply consists of matches got up by the owners of horses among themselves, when there is no betting, or very little. . . . As for shooting, I really do not care much about it, and no one bores me so much as a man who is eternally talking about shooting.

He describes to his mother his hard and miscellaneous work, and the strain of transacting important business, trying cases and hearing evidence, in a foreign tongue,

and I seldom can attempt any severe reading at night. . . . I cannot bear a lonely dinner, and I frequent messes, and the assemblies (masculine) of my fellow-countrymen. I am perfectly certain that nothing is so bad for a young Englishman as living alone in India.

He proceeds to discuss the tendency of Protestants towards Atheism and Deism, and probably shocks his mother by the remark—

I have often thought that, as every nation has its own form of Christianity, it can really matter little whether a Christian be Protestant, Roman Catholic, or Greek.

Every Sunday we pass by the broad stone slab which covers the bodies of those who were murdered at the Church porch here in 1857. I believe that it will be looked at with more interest fifty years hence, if any one remains till then in the country. . . . What a long time ago it seems already. I often sit and think of those days, and dream of what I will do if such another opening ever occurs. If I am only unmarried and in independent command I will play my part well.

This is the first sign of ambition to be found in his letters; the Mutiny had evoked it.

He writes to his father that he is at work disarming the district — a work which he dislikes particularly,—and moralises on the results of our government—

And the wildest, as well as the shallowest, notion of all seems to me that universally prevalent belief that education, civilisation, and increased material prosperity will reconcile the people of India eventually to our rule. De Tocqueville's Study of the *Ancien Régime* and the Causes of the Revolution, which I have read and analysed more attentively than I ever before read a book, appears to me to demonstrate most logically that it was the increased prosperity and enlightenment of the French people which produced the grand crash.

He is encamped near a ruined fort demolished in the Mutiny, and talks of an Oudh chief,

a sturdy rebel, who has now surrendered, received back his lands, and dwells sulkily in a small town about five miles off, no doubt cursing the Feringhis night and morning. To this fort on our borders he used to retire in the good old times when the king's officers came to demand the revenue, so that if fighting were not prosperous he might escape over the border for a while. The country, like all that I have seen of Oude, is half uncultivated and covered in parts with thick jungle, but all the north of our district is in much the same condition, and I suspect was hardly cleared at all 100 or 150 years ago."[1]

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[1] "The king took tithe if he might,
He was paid by a rogue or a fool,
We held our lands on a firmer right
Than is given by parchment rule.
Our fathers of old had cleared it
From the jungle with axe and sword."
—*Rajput Rebels.*

He cannot help contrasting his life in the jungle with

a moderately successful career among my countrymen at home, and the society of clever and accomplished men. I do not wish to seem vain, but I believe that I appreciate intensely all intellectual pleasures. . . . Also, I cannot get the books I want, . . . and I detest all novels, except the very best in an artistic point of view, quite as much as you can do yourself. . . . But yet I am not in any way sorry that I have come out to India; the Mutiny was worth ten years to a young man, and if I had any prospect of returning for good after ten years, I should be perfectly contented.

The Shahjehanpore country he finds most beautiful. "I feel that if I wished to settle down I could not choose a better spot in India; but I don't wish to settle down."

In February 1860 he hears that he has been appointed to the little district of Pilibheet, at the foot of the mountains, and is pleased because the Joint-Magistrate in charge is practically independent, and rules his small kingdom according to his fancy. He is horribly plagued with the toothache, which is the curse of his life, but gets some excitement from shooting a magnificent tiger, and likes Pilibheet well enough except for the solitude in the evenings. He occupies himself with writing verses for the papers, and sends his mother a copy, which has disappeared, saying he "wrote them all one evening when alone in my tent, and sent them to the paper next morning." He promises to send more, "anything that seems likely to please you, but I much fear my father's criticism.

Also I have a much meaner opinion of my own verses than I formerly had. I often tear up my rhymes the day after writing them." He deprecates exaggerated ideas as to his feats in the Mutiny, and says that it makes him feel painfully ridiculous to read one estimate of them by a friend in England, when he has only "gone through a few skirmishes, such as our ancestors went through every year at least." Then the loneliness oppresses him. "I am utterly unable to live in solitude. I feel the want of some excitement at any station, but I am perfectly wretched alone." He blames himself for this, but cannot help it. "I sit alone in the evening, and long for something to happen. . . . The whole country is hopelessly quiet; there is not even a murder or a highway robbery, . . . life in peace times is completely stagnant." Shooting he can get, but he is tired of it. He complains of his restlessness. By the middle of May he cannot stand it, and gets leave to go and see his brother in the mountains. "We are all peculiarly impatient of inaction, and incapacitated for a quiet humdrum existence. That is why India is the very best place to which you could have sent your two elder sons."

By August he writes from Naini Tal in the Himalayas that he is getting tired of doing nothing, and is going back to the plains. "And all our family are naturally impatient of doing nothing, and have that craving for excitement of some sort which is most strongly developed in Walter." About this time he must have received, though his letters make

no mention of it, a despatch from the Secretary of State for India, which I have found among his papers. It is as follows:—

INDIA OFFICE, *June* 11, 1860.

SIR,—The excellent service performed by you during the Mutiny and disturbances in India in 1857-58 has been brought to the notice of the Queen. As Assistant Magistrate at Bolundshuhur, you are reported to have joined in several successful excursions in the Dadree and Secunderabad Pergunnahs, and to have been repeatedly engaged with the rebels. You afterwards joined the Volunteer Cavalry at Meerut, and were engaged in the affairs at Busadh and Buroth, and I have been commanded to convey to you the gracious approbation of her Majesty of your conduct during that critical period. I am, your obedient servant,

C. WOOD.

A. LYALL, Esq.

In November he is again at Pilibheet, "very tired of my own company; . . . altogether it does not pay in spite of the charm of independence and petty despotism." His horse falls with him through a bridge of planked boats.

I make it a point of honour to ride over my own bridges, which most people consider quixotical. . . . There is great joy in Pilibheet, . . . for it was justly remarked that any other horse might have tumbled through fifty times without any notice being taken, whereas I have ever since been particularly careful in putting together my bridges.

There is nothing to do in this place but to shoot ducks. . . . It is very unlucky that I have tired of shooting in four years.

But his next letter shows that he is shooting again, and he tells the story against himself with evident enjoyment—

> I . . . shot a buck antelope, when a large tiger sprang up with a roar, and ran off. . . . . As he lived in a wilderness of high grass—a regular prairie,—I tried the old plan of driving the cattle into it. The tiger was delighted at my civility, and instantly killed three cows — gave me one shot — which I missed—polished off another stray cow . . . and walked off to his fastness in the jungle, leaving me to pay the price of the cows to the villagers.

With this letter, written in December 1860, Alfred Lyall's first period of Indian service practically closes, for in the following spring he left India, taking furlough on medical certificate. He had now been five years away from England, and had undergone much hard work and exposure. He was not actually ill, but was tired and "run down," and wanted a rest. I have possibly devoted too large a space to this part of his life; but it was a very important part. When it began he was still a boy; at the end of it he was a man. He had passed through scenes of extraordinary interest, and had learnt to bear responsibility—to think and act for himself. He might well say the Mutiny was worth ten years of exile to a young man. A lifetime of official work under ordinary conditions might not have taught him as much about India and its people, or have left so deep an impress upon his character. The lessons of the Mutiny are clearly to be traced in his writings, especially in his poems. Of these several—among them

perhaps the best—were directly inspired by the scenes of 1857 and 1858, and others show almost as plainly the effect of those stirring days upon his mind and feelings. In his later years he turned to prose as a better instrument for the expression of his philosophical and historical views; but many of his prose writings also show signs of the old influence. In fact, those five years from 1856 to 1861 were perhaps the most important of his life. No doubt his ideas were afterwards enlarged by study and experience; but when he left India in 1861 his eyes had been opened to the realities of things, and the main lines of his character had been laid down.

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CHAPTER VII.

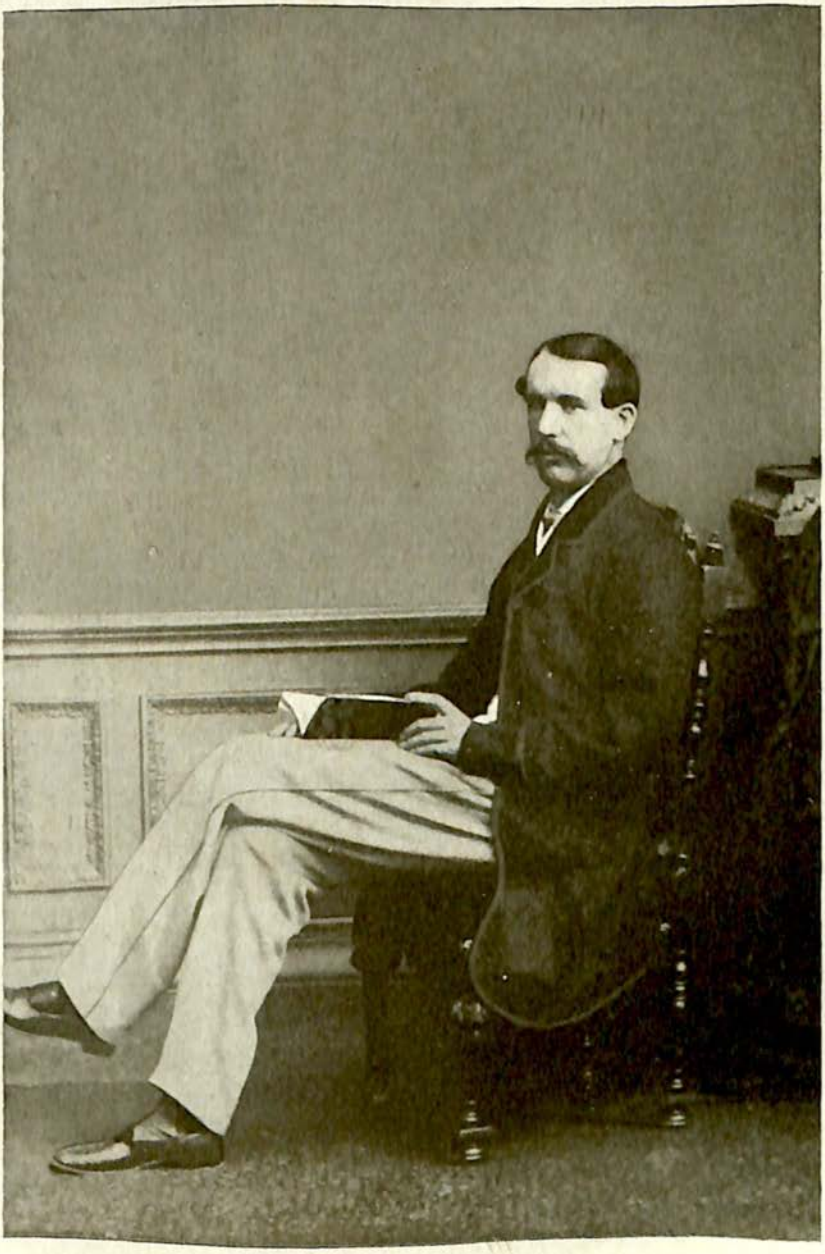
FIRST FURLOUGH TO ENGLAND, AND SECOND PERIOD OF INDIAN SERVICE.

1861–1868.

Sails for England, April 1861—Life at Harbledown—His sister Barbara—He becomes engaged to Cora Cloete—Married. November 1862—Bishop Wilkinson's description of him—His sister, Mrs Holland—Starts for India—Voyage out—Posted to Agra—Contented with India—Cold weather in camp—Mrs Lyall—Transferred to Central Provinces in charge of a district, 1864—Richard Temple—The district of Hoshungabad—Lyall writes "The Old Pindaree"—Acting Commissioner of Nagpore, 1865—His father's death—Temple beginning to recognise value of his work—Occasional verses—Deputy Commissioner of Jubbulpore, 1867—Commissioner of West Berar, 1867—Akola—He begins to be tired of Indian life—Berar Census Report, the germ of 'Asiatic Studies'—Takes furlough, April 1868.

In April 1861 Lyall sailed for England, where he remained nearly two years, recruiting his health. His letters at this time are scanty, as might be expected; but from the few that remain, and from references in later letters, it would appear that he spent much of the time in the home circle at Harbledown, renewing his acquaintance with old friends and neighbours, hunting with the East Kent hounds, and thoroughly enjoying the return to English life. In the course of the first year, before the hunting began, he went over to France, and I find in a letter to his mother a long account of his stay in Paris, but he was soon back again among his own people. His

younger sister Barbara, who when he left England had been a child of ten, was now nearly grown up, and, the elder sisters having married, she seems to have been constantly with him. They had much in common, for like him she was quick-witted and bright, with a keen sense of humour; and, to judge from what he afterwards wrote, the brother and sister, one twenty-six, the other sixteen, had "many pleasant walks, rides, railway journeys, and talks" together, and jolly days passed in "nonsense, rhyming, and inextinguishable laughter." Apparently his religious views, under the influence of Voltaire and India, had developed in a direction which was far from orthodox; and his mother, poor lady, seems to have spent long evenings in vain efforts to bring him back to her own belief. But, though this troubled him somewhat, he retained a very pleasant recollection of his first furlough. It was closed by an event which was of great importance to him, for in 1862, when paying a visit in Suffolk, he met and became engaged to his future wife, Cora Cloete, a beautiful and attractive girl who, like him, had gone through the perils of the Mutiny. She belonged to a well-known Cape family of Dutch descent; but two of her aunts had married English officers, and with one of them she was staying. The engagement was short, for though his father and mother considered, with some reason perhaps, from their point of view, that he was hardly in a position to marry, he insisted on doing so without delay; and the wedding took place at Cavendish on the 12th of November. Lyall's best man was the then curate of Cavendish, now



ABOUT 1861.

Bishop Wilkinson, of Northern and Central Europe, who to the end of his life remained one of his most respected friends.

Bishop Wilkinson writes of him—

> At that time he was slightly built, of medium height. His languid grey eyes would flash up delightfully when you touched the humorous spring that was ever ready to respond to a joke. Naturally shy and reserved, it was necessary to go two-thirds of the way to meet what when reached was a character of unusual interest. Like all the Lyalls, when with those he knew well and liked, he threw aside all reserve and overflowed with quizzical fun. I have rarely known any one so quick at seeing the ridiculous in persons and things.

And the Bishop tells an amusing story of Lyall bursting into his room one morning, convulsed with laughter at having seen the rector of the parish hunted round his own garden in his nightshirt by a swarm of bees, and trying to shelter himself from their wrath under the gooseberry bushes.

The "jolly days" came to an end with the autumn of 1862, and Lyall's twenty-eighth birthday found him halfway on his voyage out to India, a married man with new responsibilities. Just before leaving Harbledown he writes to Mrs Holland: "I feel a bit anxious and uncertain as to the future; . . . if I do not get on well professionally in the next six years I shall feel that I have lost my chance. . . . Good-bye, my dearest sister." He was not to lose his chance, for professional success was not long in coming, and his anxiety was soon over.

At such times, when leaving England for the East,

a man is apt to feel low-spirited, but the feeling soon wears off if one is young and happy; and before reaching Alexandria, Lyall writes to Mrs Holland in a different strain—

It was a beautiful dawn, reminding me so vividly of the fresh bright mornings of winter in Upper India, that my small amount of home-sickness vanished at once, and I felt a longing to get back to the old life. There *is* a peculiar charm about the East, a real pleasure in the light and air which I have never felt in England, and of which an English summer gives no idea. . . . Cora has had bad headaches, but never complains, and is much more an aid than an impediment in the journey.

He goes on to speak of returning after six or seven years, and adds what may read strangely to those who regarded him as a cynical and undemonstrative man—

Meanwhile do not forget me: sisters do not often have brothers who love you so much as we do, and small credit to me at least, for until I met Cora you were the only woman of whose society I never remember to have been tired for one minute.

In February 1863 he was back at his work as a district officer, having been posted as Assistant Magistrate to Agra, one of the hottest but pleasantest stations in the North-West Provinces. Here he seems to have been as happy as his restless nature would ever allow him to be. He still felt the reaction after the stirring scenes of the Mutiny, and his letters show that the drudgery of peaceful work wearied him. But he had some society and many of the amenities of life.

LADY LYALL—ABOUT 1862.

I have plenty to do [he writes to his mother], and I like the Magistrate who is over me, so I am not unhappy, but I am never contented, and never wish to be so, until I obtain something worth having. . . . I suppose the country has never been so dull as since 1860. . . . I should not personally object to the most frightful convulsion. There is nothing to do or to write about, and I continually find myself looking back to the old disturbed times as to the only piece of romance I am ever to enjoy.

But he writes in another letter—

You must not fancy that I am anxious and unhappy. I am neither. I have only a vague wish for what I cannot exactly tell: it certainly is not riches. I think it is distinction.

That he was keeping in touch with the currents of religious thought is evident from his reference to a heterodox bishop—

Colenso is of course by this time almost extinct at home, he never made much noise out here; a country which has three or four rival creeds does not excite itself about minor heresies. You are quite right in making the general remark that it is more easy to believe than to doubt, and, moreover, it is more comfortable.

In the course of the summer Lyall was offered the acting charge of a "district" in Oudh, which was a compliment for a man of his standing, but he was obliged to refuse for pecuniary reasons, and supposed that he should soon get rid of any romance about distinction. A few days later he went for a short visit to his old station of Bulandshahr, where he found all traces of the Mutiny had disappeared; and then to Delhi, which was in a very different condition,

the walls still riddled with shot-holes and the great breaches only half repaired. He gazed at the famous ridge with a touch of the old enthusiasm, but Delhi, seen under a gloomy and cloudy sky, looked melancholy. "It is an unlucky place," he says, "with its history marked by sack and massacre." For the rest, he was still contented enough.

I do not dislike India. I often examine myself, and always conclude that this country suits me best altogether, and that if you discard the elements of comfort and quiet ease there is not very much to regret in a common English life. But this life is fast sinking into monotonous propriety, and the chance of a catastrophe seems growing less and less.

Trevelyan had lately published his "Competition Wallah," and there had been considerable discussion about the new system of recruitment for the Indian Civil Service. On this point Lyall writes—

My great objection to the Competition Civilians is that they are too like clever office men at home, very good at writing précis, and accurate in their legal functions, but without sympathy for the semi-barbarous natives whom they govern, and only liking the respectable educated native, who to me is a bore. . . . I have been much refreshed lately by talking with Rajah Dinkur Rao, . . . the famous Gwalior Prime Minister, . . . he is the type of an acute intellectual Hindoo. He always assures me that the natives prefer a bad native government to our best patent institutions, and I know he is right.

Lyall correctly represented the views of Sir Dinkur Rao. It was my good fortune many years afterwards, when I was in the Indian Foreign Office, to know this

remarkable man, to whose sagacity and courage we owed much in the Mutiny. He never changed his opinion about our rule in India, and I can see now his keen bright eyes, and hear his little cynical chuckling laugh, as he pointed out to me in the frankest terms the absurdity from the native point of view of some choice measure of reform.

On the 30th August Lyall writes to his mother—

> After all, our trade is government on a rather grand scale, and I would sooner work at this in India than do mercantile or legal drudgery in England. The real thing in which England beats India is the social life, though after all Agra beats most country towns. It is at any rate the severest punishment which you can inflict on my errors to devote two-thirds of your letter to polemics. If hours of vivid discussion in long evenings last year could produce small impression, how can you expect two pages of notepaper to do it?

Altogether, he was happy enough, working hard, but riding, swimming, playing racquets; while his wife enjoyed her housekeeping and the amusements of the place. She was in strong health, and he rejoiced in her triumphs at archery, croquet, and driving. Their house commanded a view of the grand fort on the river-side and of the famous Taj; and they had "the best pair of mares in Agra." What more could young people want? But the close of the year brought them further happiness; for early in December, during the delicious cold weather of the North-West Provinces, in which he always revelled, Lyall describes how he went out to

camp with his wife and his first child, being wonders for health and strength. "The child," he says, "has eyes like the fishpools of Heshbon, with wondrous depth of intelligent gaze."

He got back to Agra for Christmas, for there was a great gathering to meet the Lieutenant-Governor of the Province, the district officers coming in from every station within a radius of a hundred miles. As in all these Indian gatherings—very pleasant they used to be—there was much hospitality, and festivities of every kind; and Lyall writes with pride that his wife had won two archery prizes—

> driving one arrow up to the notch into the very centre of the target, so that it was only discovered by looking behind. She certainly shoots like a lineal descendant of the Chevy Chase archer who unto Sir Hugh Montgomery so right his shaft did set.

His mother had written to congratulate him on the birth of his child, and he answers—

> I am much touched by the deep affection expressed in your letter of the 17th Dec^r. to me, the more so that I feel myself so unworthy of it that I am sometimes puzzled to account for it; and I value it beyond all price as the highest and purest possession which can be allotted to me. . . . But this is not a subject on which I can say much.

At this time died his aunt, widow of the Dean of Canterbury, and Lyall writes to his mother—

> I felt real affection for her, and now one branch of the family has utterly passed away, leaving nothing . . . to remind us of my poor uncle, whose memory, I cannot tell why, always brings tears into my eyes now. I suppose it is

because somehow I lost nerve when I went to bid farewell to him in 1855.

Alfred Lyall's affections were not widely diffused or easy to win; but where his own people were concerned they were singularly strong. It seems only right to bring out the fact, for he was often described as cold and unloving.

In the course of his long camping season in the Agra district, so full of historical interest, he saw Akbar's city of Fatehpur Sikri, with its beautiful ruins, and the great emperor's tomb at Secundra, and the fortress of Deeg, which half a century before had repulsed Lord Lake's repeated assaults. It was his last cold weather in the North-West Provinces, for he was soon to be transferred.

Meanwhile he was writing to his sister Barbara, much as he had written before to Canon Holland, about the work of our missionaries. "Paid missionaries have never done *rien que vaille.*" But if he was not satisfied with Protestant missions, he found no great satisfaction in his own religious views—

I wish I could see any way out of the dreary desert of scepticism in which I am wandering, but it seems to me that we overrate altogether the importance of the human race, its doings and its destinies. I am haunted by Darwin's struggle for existence and the desolate grandeur of the ideas in parts 54, 55, 56 of "In Memoriam."

Returning to a happier subject, his wife, he says she

has certainly great physical nerve, and would have made a man after Kingsley's own heart. I am afraid she can beat me

at all things which a man and woman can both do—riding, for instance, and yet I take credit to myself for having "gone in" for all these manly sports more than any known member of the family.

In the spring of 1864 Lyall received the offer of a district in the Central Provinces, and his eight years' connection with the North-West came to an end. He had done good work, especially during the Mutiny, and had become known as a capable officer; but it does not seem that he had then made any remarkable impression. A few days ago I received from a native gentleman in India a letter about him. It dwells especially upon his treatment of his old friends, when he had become Lieutenant-Governor of the province. Lyall, the writer says, was "just the same as when he was an assistant magistrate"; and this was greatly appreciated. But when he was a young man

there was nothing peculiar or extraordinary in the disposal of the cases, or the management of the affairs of the Tehsil, or district, committed to his charge, which gave any promise or indication that he would one day rise to the position he did, but the power of his pen manifested itself even in those days; he was regarded as a great munshi—prose writer.

However this may be, Lyall was picked out as one of the young civilians best suited for transfer to the Central Provinces.

This was a wild and backward stretch of country, "vast jungle tracts cut out of the very centre of India," which had lately been taken in hand by that peculiar but most energetic and able man, Richard

Temple,[1] who had distinguished himself in the Punjab as secretary to John Lawrence. Temple was looking about him everywhere for capable assistants, "trying to crimp for his ship all the best men from other crews," and Lyall's name was brought to his notice by his cousin and private secretary, Rivett-Carnac, the author of 'Many Memories,'[2] who describes the circumstances in his pleasant book.[2]

It happened that just at this moment Lyall's District Magistrate had taken four months' leave to England, and Lyall had been appointed to act for him. . . . "So," as Lyall says, "I got two good offers at once." He writes, after his manner, that he had been very much disturbed in spirit thereby. He was always worried by having to choose between two courses. However, in this case he was not long in doubt, for though the acting appointment at Agra gave him temporary good pay and rank in the gayest station in the North-West Provinces, and the other offer was that of Hoshungabad, a dull little place in the wilds, the second meant permanent independence and a salary of £120 a-month, which, as he said, was "promotion and an opening for the future, at the expense of some present discomfort and great social loss." Moreover, in one of his moments of restlessness and craving for a more active life, he had volunteered for service in the new province, and he could not well

[1] Afterwards The Rt. Honble. Sir Richard Temple, Bart., G.C.S.I., &c., Governor of Bombay, and then a Member of Parliament.

[2] Now Colonel J. H. Rivett-Carnac, C.I.E., F.S.A., late Aide-de-Camp to Queen Victoria.

have drawn back from his word. So at twenty-nine years of age, after eight years of Indian service, Lyall was a full-fledged district magistrate, one of the real rulers of India.[1]

It was a great change for the young wife, who, as Lyall writes to his sister, was just going to move into a beautiful house in Agra, and to assume the management of the Archery Club, and had "acquired a certain social distinction" by her pre-eminence in riding and driving and other sports. She had to leave all at ten days' notice, to dispose of her furniture as best she could, to pack up all portable possessions, and to set off with her baby on one of the most wearisome journeys which could well be imagined. But that was the way in India, and doubtless she made no complaints. After twenty-four hours in the train the Lyalls arrived at Mirzapore, which was their real starting-point, and were almost immediately set down to play croquet, a game which he regarded as "most stupid. . . . But Cora excels in this, as in other muscular sports, and astonished the natives." It was then the height of the

[1] To the vast majority of the Indian population the magistrate of the district was the Government. The Indian peasant hardly ever saw an officer of higher rank; and, though supervised, the magistrate had in fact almost unlimited power within his own charge. A distinguished Indian once said in the Legislative Council: "The Viceroy represents the might and majesty of the Empire, but the Viceroy is not so potent as the district officer who has found his way to the hearts of the people. . . . Many an English administrator has left behind him a name which is a household word in our villages and towns." These men are unknown in England, but with the equally unknown soldiers who carry on our Indian wars, they have been and are the real builders and upholders of the British Dominion.

hot weather, and the rest of the journey had to be made at night in a carriage drawn by bullocks, "at the humiliating pace of 2½ miles an hour." After a week of this slow progress the travellers reached Jubbulpore, cheered on the road by the light-hearted company of a Madras captain of foot, who

was a great comfort to us, especially when our pole broke. . . . I wonder whether one ever meets in England with men who, out of sheer good-fellowship, volunteer to share all one's discomforts and delays simply because they happen to have fallen in with one on the road. We should have come to unspeakable grief but for the aid of our friend, who put me to shame by the jovial manner in which he helped to patch up our broken carriage in the middle of the night, and admitted me with my luggage to a share of his own cart.

Arrived at Jubbulpore Lyall found the place

wonderfully green and fresh after Agra. The perfumed air and the fireflies remind me of Ceylon. It is hot enough, but it is more like the languid heat of the tropics . . . than the fiery scorching blast that sweeps over the bare plains of North India.

He had to push on again, another hundred and sixty miles, before reaching his own station, Hoshungabad, on the Nerbudda river; "but," he says,

I am now on friendly ground, as the other district officers have welcomed me with a cordiality remarkable when I consider that I have been brought in over the heads of many, and I shall be forwarded by their aid.

That again was the way in India—where Englishmen, whatever their faults, were loyal.

Directly after he took charge of his new district he had to ride off twenty miles to meet his fiery chief, Temple, who was sweeping across it in one of his incessant tours of inspection. Temple's energy amused but rather alarmed Lyall, who was constitutionally averse from interference with native ways, and did not take very kindly to dry-nursing a district. "The country is very backward, and he is determined to shove it forward; the country resists inertly as long as it can, tumbles back as often as Temple props it up, and when forcibly driven forward runs the wrong way, like a pig going to Cork market." But, though now in responsible charge of a large tract of country, Lyall was still under orders, and he writes that "as long as I am young I do not mind giving up my own theories of government to the will of my official superior." Meanwhile the brave young wife was doing her share.

> You must forgive her for not writing [Lyall tells Mrs Holland], she really is very busy in her own way—managing the making-up of furniture, repairs of the house, poultry, cows, sheep, and encroaching daily on my stable. This is her line—objective,—she cannot write long accounts of what she does, but she does a great deal, and as we are now in a primitive place where shops are not, such qualities are very valuable.

At this primitive place, Hoshungabad, he settled himself down, regretting somewhat the social life of Agra, but determined at last to save a little money, or at all events keep out of debt. From his first letter it appears that he had been writing

"a story in a very inferior magazine out here," so that from a literary point of view he was not wholly idle.

As time goes on he regrets Agra more, and complains that he is getting too much wrapped up in his work, because there is nothing else to do.

I often lament that I have not enough play, for I am certain that this continual work narrows the mind. . . . Agra was excellent in that way. I could ride across country after a jackal with the station pack in the morning, work all day, and go to a party in the evening; here I can only get excitement out of my work.

Still there was some variety. His district consisted of "150 miles of the Nerbudda valley, lying between two ranges of hills, and composed of black alluvial soil which turns into bottomless mud after much rain"; and he had rather perilous journeys in the rainy season, swimming the Nerbudda on an elephant, or riding his Arab mare across the swollen streams. In the station itself he could occasionally play cricket. Also he was reading French books, and was keenly interested in Newman's 'Apologia.' He did not agree with it, "but still I can understand and respect Newman, and have not the remotest idea of mocking him. I thought Kingsley's rejoinder . . . a very poor and unworthy performance — a mere throwing of dirt after his victorious antagonist."

In November 1864 Lyall writes to his father about his marriage—

"I have a sort of faith in the old idea that good-luck should follow a man who boldly follows his first real impulse

in these matters, and that at any rate he deserves to be *wished* good-luck."

And in another letter he proceeds to describe the life in camp with wife and child, the wife

"riding again and getting into order my fidgety Arab mare," the child "coming on a great deal too fast, and developing the family restlessness, running about eternally, and pulling everything to pieces. . . . I have vowed not to interfere with the nursery, but I sit and predict every possible ill for her future career to a perfectly callous mother, who does not even object to her tearing up my valuable despatches to Government."

Was there ever a mother who cared a straw about the fate of despatches to Government, and would it be an unmixed evil if they were more frequently torn up?

In the course of this year Lyall composed the first poem which really brought him into notice as a writer of verse, and Rivett-Carnac induced Lyall to let him publish it in an Indian newspaper. This was "The Old Pindaree," which now stands first in the volume of Lyall's poems. It is a fine stirring piece, though less finished than some of his later work; and it had a great success in India, where people were able to appreciate the knowledge it shows, and the local humour of some of its passages. In a letter to his mother, written later, he says: "Tennyson's 'Northern Farmer' gave me the keynote, though you would not now find it."

At this time Lyall had begun to speak of "the terrible idle years which, if I live, will follow my

retirement from this very active service." The apprehension constantly recurred, and grew stronger as years went on. It was early to begin, before he was thirty. Few men at that time of life look so far ahead, or look ahead in that spirit. He was always old for his age, and a little inclined to take a gloomy view of the future.

He closes his year's correspondence with the words—

"There is a mountain about 50 miles off, 4000 feet its highest peak, and it has just been made over to my district, with orders to me to make it habitable and accessible, so I am going up there after Christmas."

This mountain is now the flourishing little hill station of Pachmari. It does not seem that he ever had much to do with the work of making the place habitable, for his time at Hoshungabad was drawing to a close, but the words are quoted as an illustration of the multifarious duties imposed upon the Indian district officer. His successors doubtless had to carry out the scheme.

The following year, 1865, opens with a rather melancholy letter to Mrs Holland. The Christmas festivities in his remote district had not been very successful; and he wonders that his wife does not feel as much as he does the change from the brightness of Agra. He is oppressed by the sense of age—

I am in low spirits ever since yesterday, when I completed my thirtieth year, and therefore, being married, can never more be called a young man. I cling like a pagan to youth, and strength, and the flying years.

But he finds comfort in the fact that "the old notion of Russian encroachment towards Kabul is reappearing. I always believed in it, and perhaps may live to see a second reoccupation of Afghanistan and the revival of real foreign politics in India." A dozen years later he was not only to see it, but to be one of the chief actors in the drama. Meanwhile he says he is getting to bear solitude much better than formerly, though "as always I don't care about anything in the world half as much as the company of persons with whom I like to talk." He is having a new house built, and is living comfortably—

> Our live stock increases in patriarchal fashion; we have, besides horses, a flock of sheep, three cows, two oxen,—or rather a bull and an ox,—and a camel, also 16 baggage camels on hire for the cold season; goats and a deer need not count. I lay in large stores of hay and grain, and feel a man of substance though I have no rupees.

The picture is pleasant enough, but thoughts of home come in sharply at times, and he looks back with regret to his hunting in Kent. "After all, I declare that there is nothing in life like the swing of an English gallop, and the muffled thunder of horse-hoofs over turf."

Before he had been a full year in Hoshungabad, the only year he ever spent as magistrate in charge of a district, Lyall received, to his surprise, the offer of a higher appointment,—the acting charge for six months of the Commissionership of Nagpore. This meant the control of three or four districts, or of a country as large as a minor European kingdom, with

considerable increase of pay and rank. It was, moreover, an agreeable change of residence, for Nagpore, the capital of the Central Provinces, was a large city with a military garrison and some society. Lyall's position was in some ways rather delicate, as he had been put over the heads of many seniors; but that could not be helped, and he had already had some experience of the loyalty with which Englishmen in India accepted such incidents. His letters show no elation at his good fortune, which at his age was remarkable. "I cannot quite make out," he writes to his father, "why I am sent for to Nagpore, as I have certainly distinguished myself lately in no way;" and he is inclined to attribute his success to his beard, "which is doing well," or to a dinner he had lately given to a high official, with the help of two bottles of champagne borrowed from a bachelor friend. He does not think of "The Old Pindaree," which had drawn Temple's attention to him and his official work. But he accepts the offer without misgivings, and just as his new house at Hoshungabad is finished he leaves it for Nagpore.

It was another rough journey for a lady and child, in the hot weather, and therefore at night, "over the most horrible stony tracks," and Lyall describes to his mother how "during most of the journey I was engaged in holding on behind as a drag to the carts downhill, and helping to push uphill." But they got through safely, and were received at Nagpore with the usual hospitality and kindness. His mother had evidently been reverting to the old subject of his

extravagance, for in his first letter from Nagpore he writes to her—

I am amused at your having discovered that much of our failings in this matter is owing to your omission to teach us economy as children. I have often thought that our extravagance was owing to the unceasing lessons upon economy which I remember to have received from earliest childhood, and to the care with which, as I now think, the family resources were underrated. But the truth is, that it was of no use to impress economy upon us and to send us to Eton, for we had not strength of character to resist the trial.

Nevertheless he argues that he is no longer extravagant, and it is true that from the date of his marriage he began to change his views rapidly in this respect. When I knew him a few years later he had given up the old reckless Indian ways, and was a careful man enough, with an eye to the future. He finishes his letter by saying that he has in him "too great a tincture of the 'Bohemian' to care as much as I should for family hearths," and finds it a drawback that his professional rise brings him more among earnest respectable society, and less among easy-going comrades.

His promotion was not allowed to pass without some criticism from the Indian newspapers, one of which referred to the matter as follows:—

These two appointments, bad as they are, scarcely come up to "Sir John's last job, and worst—until the next."[1] There are several able and distinguished officers, we hear, who well

[1] Sir John Lawrence, afterwards Lord Lawrence, was then Viceroy of India.

remember seeing Mr Lyall an infant in arms when they had entered the service, and who have for many long years waited patiently and laboured faithfully in the hope of obtaining just such an appointment as that to which this young gentleman has been thus suddenly elevated. We have not a word to say against Mr Lyall; he is a gallant young fellow, and behaved well at Bulandshahr during that fatal month of May when others who shall be nameless showed perhaps less favourably. But is he the only civilian who showed gallantry during the Mutiny? Has he ever been *conspicuously* meritorious in any one way? And if not, for truth demands that the question be answered in the negative, why is he thus allowed to supersede not only the able officers named above, three or four of whom would have probably gladly accepted the post, but more than fifty others, V.C.'s, C.B.'s, old standing collectors, deputy commissioners, &c., to every single one of whom the appointment would have been great and, in many cases, well-deserved promotion?

But all remarks about his youth Lyall took philosophically, remarking that the imputation had once been brought against Pitt, and that "nothing could be more advantageous than to be advertised as the subject of unheard-of promotion, when my assailants can find no trace of nepotism or private interest to allege as the cause thereof."

His first impression of Nagpore was agreeable. The people were, he thought, more than usually dull, because the military element was ten miles distant; but he had a good house, and the country was attractive. "Perhaps you are not aware, I was not, that with the exception of the great Gangetic valley, and the Punjab, Hindustan is a country of hills and undulating plateaux." But he regrets the friends he

has left behind at Hoshungabad, and writes to his people about one of them, Charles Elliott, "a very clever man, who will some day distinguish himself, . . . a great reader, and almost too much a *littéraire* for India." Elliott, afterwards Sir Charles Elliott, K.C.S.I., became Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal; and when he had retired from India, did good work in England. He was an admirable example of the men the Indian Civil Service used to produce—a colossal worker, whom nothing seemed to tire, physically or mentally; and withal one of the most upright and kind-hearted of men. Lyall and he were friends as long as they lived.

The surrender of the Confederates at Appomattox had just been telegraphed, and the Indian cotton market had immediately gone down, a curious example of the interdependence of distant countries. "I hope it will never rise again," Lyall says, "for the Government wearied the life out of us district officers by making us turn cotton fanciers. . . . I am terribly sick of the name of cotton, and I am very glad to see the honest rustics of Hoshungabad returning to wheat crops." He was to have much more to do with cotton during the next ten years; but for the time he had other and less unpalatable work on his hands. His first duty as Commissioner was the trial of a number of "dacoits," or gang robbers, some of whose raids, he sympathetically remarks, must have been very good fun; and the general supervision of his extensive charge kept him fully occupied.

I cannot find that he was doing any literary work.

"A ride in the morning, office work all day, and the severe exercise of racquets in the evening, followed by a drive in the twilight, takes me through the day fast enough; we dine very late and go to bed at 10 P.M."

In this letter he is writing to his mother, and the subject he had so often discussed with her comes up again—

> And to speak the truth, I always saw that you had too good an intellect to be able to solace yourself satisfactorily with religious commonplaces. I am not sneering at real religion, but I believe that none but dull and self-complacent people of the incapable sort ever really managed to console themselves for drawbacks in this life by a sense of fitness for the next, about which, say what you will, we know nothing distinct whatever; . . . people of real energy or intellect cannot deceive themselves thus, nor confuse simple ennui with a longing for the world to come.

He advises her to read Browning's "Prospice," "which I take to describe the right way of looking forward to the inevitable end." The advice, coming from him, is curious, for, after all, "Prospice" shows the most joyful confidence in a future life.

He turns to a less personal subject—

> Yes, the Church is very strong in England, in spite of the wonderful vagaries of its ministers and the absence of discipline. As long as the upper and middle classes keep power it will never be hurt, but it is intimately connected with "State," and I think that the triumph of democracy would be its ruin.

As to his official work Lyall did well, but it was rather against the grain. Although he liked power, as

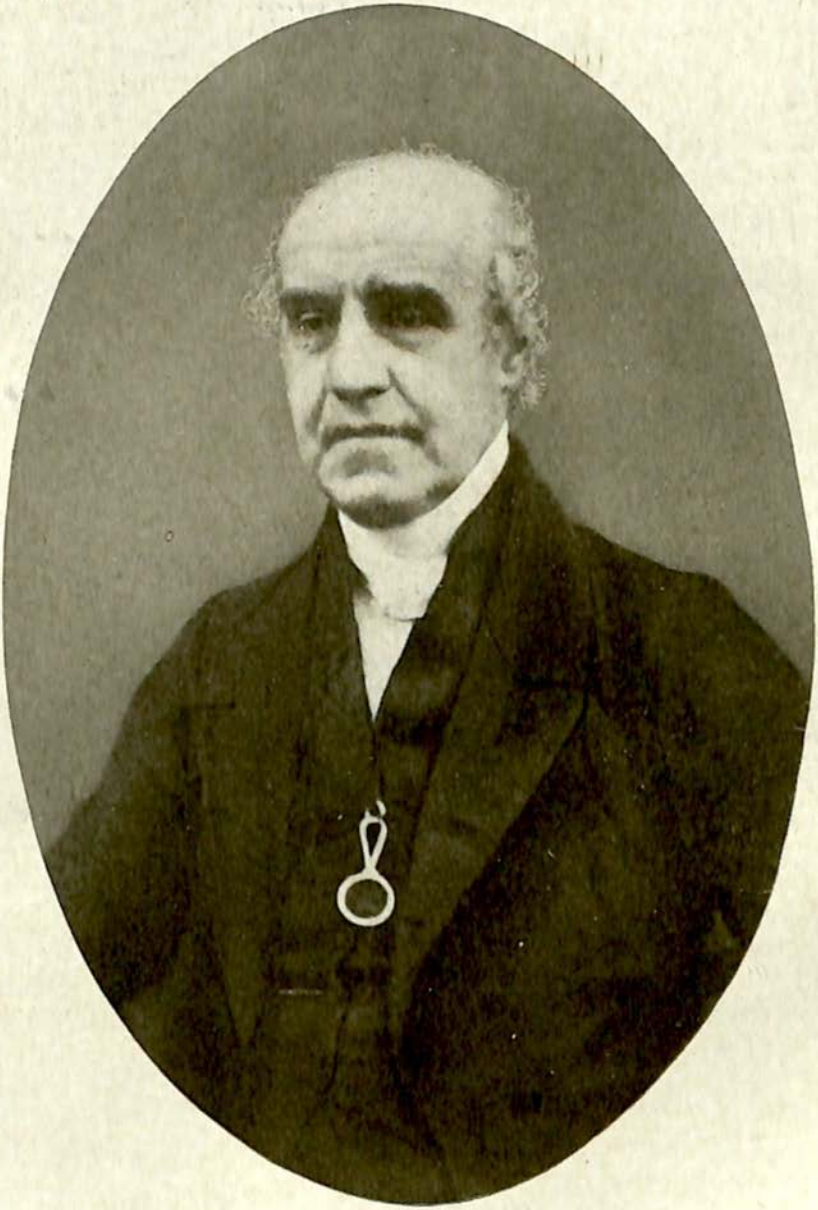
most able men do, he was, as already explained, averse from unnecessary interference with Oriental ways.

I have now got through three out of my six months [he writes to Mrs Holland], and I don't know that I have made any mistakes. I have in all sincerity a healthy contempt of my own powers, amounting at times to the feeling that I am an impostor who must soon be exposed, which keeps me from many blunders, but, on the other hand, my real sympathies and tastes are not with a pushing, go-ahead administration like this of Mr Temple's.

At the same time he appreciated the merits of such men. "Indian statesmen are far below English in their wide knowledge of finance, economy, and the machinery of complicated institutions,—they cannot manage a steam-engine, but they can drive restive and ill-trained horses over bad roads;" and he had no great opinion of the "highly educated, clever, fair-weather governor" so often sent out from England to India and the Colonies.

The same letter has a remark which reads curiously to those who knew Lyall late in life. Speaking of a man whose closing years had been remarkably successful, he says: "I know how utterly different mine will be, for I have not the knack of making many friends." The "prospect of a retired Indian's comfortable obscurity" was always most distasteful to him. "I don't know that I look forward to anything in particular," he wrote, "except to see once more two or three people in the world;" but in point of fact this would never have sufficed to make him happy.

Meanwhile, one of the two or three people in the



THE REVEREND ALFRED LYALL.

world whom he hoped to see again had passed away; for he writes to his mother—

Yesterday's mail brought letters from my sisters giving an account of my father's last illness and death. There is no reason why I should try and describe to you how deeply I was afflicted by the narrative, or how I have now for the first time realised the feeling of a great, irreparable loss. You can understand well enough. Now I am looking back on my past life and recalling all the old memories of scenes and faces, from the days when I learned Latin by his side in the Godmersham dining-room, to the meeting in Paris when I came home from India, and the last parting at Dover. And beside the remorseful recollection of faults and omissions that now come up. . . . However, it is too late now, and . . . to us out here such an end to life as that described by my sisters seems almost enviable—to die at seventy years in one's own country, surrounded by those one loves best, and to be laid in the old churchyard on the hill above Canterbury. . . . It is a great consolation that his illness was so short.

A little later he writes to an aunt—

The news of my poor father's death affected me deeply. I had the greatest respect and veneration for his character, as well as love for him personally, and I had always hoped to see him once more.

On November 24th he writes to Mrs Holland—

I do not know that I have any great cause to reproach myself in regard to my conduct towards him, but I would give much to live over again the last year of my stay at home. I often think how he used to like those drives with me in the dogcart, and I feel that I might have done more to please and amuse him.

Lyall's acting appointment having expired, he took

short leave and went up to his old haunts in Pilibheet, hoping to meet his brothers, but the meeting fell through, and he returned disappointed. Nevertheless the leave did him good, for he had spent a few weeks in a bracing climate and met some old friends.

I am beginning to have a better opinion of myself [he writes], now that I find that there are men in the world who seem glad to see me and talk with me, men whom most people are glad to meet. I don't think I make many friends among womankind, I do not lay myself out much in that direction now.

He was, in fact, beginning to be understood and liked by many of those with whom he came into contact—women as well as men; and his professional reputation was rising fast. On his return to Nagpore he heard that he had been chosen to act for a time as Secretary to the Government of the province, and this further promotion was a gratifying compliment.

Referring to the death of his father and other members of the family, he writes to his mother at this time—

Such losses as we have suffered leave no sting, nothing but the feeling of remorse or failure should embitter after-years, and you can have neither feeling. I hope, my dear mother, that you will not analyse or intensify your emotions too much; you have a peculiarly susceptible and very imaginative temperament, do not give it too much subjective or self-conscious play, especially in religious matters. "Laissons l'enfer au bon Dieu," as some Frenchman says; there are none who trust in God's wide mercy and benevolence so little as those who pay the most implicit reverence to His written word; the letter of the law obscures the spirit. . . . The great object of education is to learn to think for oneself, to clear the mind of illusions, to see things as they really are, and to

understand that God is not the God of the dead, but of the living—that we did not find out everything that is to be found out about the eternal destinies 2000 years ago, and that, as Kingsley says, it is a miserable delusion to think that what would be unjust for a man to do could by any possible proof be shown to be just on the supposition that God did it. It is most difficult, as Gladstone says, to separate the essential from the accidental—the changing from the immutable—in all that we read of the past and see before our eyes; but among jarring creeds and tottering traditions a man can always know the right from the wrong, and can hold to that. And he who lets any dogma, however solemnly announced, warp his straight view of justice, or stand in the slightest degree between him and the few people who really love him, under the notion that he will get his profit in another world, will, in my belief, be terribly disappointed when he comes to give account of his work and demand his wages; he will find that he has been misled as to the character of his employer.

I don't know whether I ought to send you such outpourings as the above; but I write to you as to an intimate friend.

There are flaws in the argument perhaps; life would be very simple if a man could always know the right from the wrong. But it is a characteristic letter, in more respects than one.

The cold weather of 1865 brought a large gathering to Nagpore, for a Central Provinces Exhibition had been organised by the provincial Government, and he was kept hard at work in connection with it; but in the following May, having reverted to his commissionership, he was out in camp on a tour of inspection. From there he writes—

I suppose there is no wilder or less known part of India than the interminable forests south-east of Nagpore, towards

the sea; it is a hilly forest country inhabited by what we call aboriginal tribes, with here and there an oasis of cultivation and civilised settlement by the superior races. . . . The sad fate of the many Englishmen whose bones lie in these remote corners of a strange land always haunts me for a long time after seeing their graves. . . . However, with good pluck and good luck I hope to see again the old country, when I come back tired with life in jungle and tent, with toil and travelling wellnigh spent, eastward never again to roam.[1]

In July 1866 he writes to Mrs Holland—

We are still at Nagpore, and likely to remain; the Chief Commissioner seems disposed to keep me here to do odd work and fill up intervals created by absence on leave of higher officers. I am now employed in selecting and compiling a list of laws from the statute-book. I have also got some historical papers to put into shape, and other semi-literary jobs which suit me well.

The fact was that Temple and others were beginning to recognise that Lyall's pen was a very useful asset, and to take advantage of it. It does not seem that he was contributing much to literature proper, except that he published this year some verses in an Indian paper. Like many of his contributions to the press, these verses were only of local and temporary interest, and he did not preserve them; but as usual they contained some spirited if not very careful lines—

"Who were the soldiers that India won?
Men who recked little of life or labour,
Charged to the mouth of a Punjab gun,
Matched their steel with an Afghan sabre."

[1] These words were afterwards brought into one of his "Horatian Reminiscences."

Another of these hastily written pieces, "The Nagpore Cinderella," is republished in Rivett-Carnac's 'Many Memories.' It contains the following stanzas :—

"Where foaming o'er her curb of stone
Nerbudda leaps, and leads her fountains,
Or deep in southern forest lone
Where far Godáveri bathes the mountains,
She wandered here, she lingered there,
She knew no books, she wore no bodice;
With leaf and flower she decked her hair—
A simple nymph, a rustic goddess.

Sometimes through moonlit highland glade,
Like Grecian hamadryad flitting,
Or by the creaming cool cascade,
A naiad in the noon-day sitting.
And oft, when thus the savage wight
The lonely girl perchance had seen, he
Adored the huntress of the night,
Or scattered flowers to fair Undiné."

In September 1866 Lyall was still at Nagpore, acting for the third time as Commissioner, and absorbed in professional work, but uncertain as to his future, the more so because he had lost his first savings in a disaster which overtook the Bank of Bombay. He was evidently interesting himself in English politics, for a little later he writes to Mrs Holland—

As for politics, I am more and more Radical every year. I think that we have had enough of Government by comfortable country gentlemen and the oligarchy of the House of Commons. If I had a little more talent and money I would set up as a fierce demagogue on my return to England.

When the cold weather came he was still unsettled,

having been for eighteen months "doing other people's work in other people's houses," without a fixed appointment, and being now obliged to go off, twelve days' march, to another exhibition. So, in the spring of 1867, he sent his wife and children to England, where they were lovingly received by his mother, remaining by himself to face the constant moves which at that time seemed to be his lot in life. In June he was sent to Jubbulpore as Deputy-Commissioner, but with a warning that he might soon be transferred to a higher post. He writes to his mother—

Jubbulpore is one of the pleasantest little stations in India. I am loth to quit it for temporary promotion, but I never allow personal discomfort to stand in my professional path—if I can master my distastes that is, for I am getting lazy and cynical, more inclined for books and dilettantism than for rough outdoor work. I wish I could feel, like so many people, that I had a "mission" to do this or that, that ordinary business was a high and holy work—in short, that I could whip up more enthusiasm, which others seem to feel about matters to me uninteresting. You will do me the justice to believe that I am not affecting to be *blasé* in writing to you; there are certain things which make me passionate enough,—what I mean is that I rather envy men who believe that they do a vast amount of good to their fellow-creatures, and whose daily work is gilded by that conviction.

There was, in fact, no affectation in what he wrote. It was alike his strength and his weakness that he was not so entirely possessed by the demon of work as most Indian officials are. What Lord Dufferin called "the traditions of gigantic industry," which

characterised the Indian Civil Service, never fully laid hold upon him, as they did of his friend Charles Elliott, and Temple, and John Lawrence, and many others. He was, as he once said of himself, a born sceptic about everything; and his abnormally keen sense of humour prevented him from taking his work too seriously. If, on the one hand, his comparative indifference in this respect prevented him from doing all that he might have done as an administrator, his attitude of comparative detachment, rather English than Indian, gave him more leisure for thought and study and writing. This was a great gain—not to him only; but it must be admitted that the successful administration of India by a few hundred Englishmen would have been impossible if they had not brought to it unbounded enthusiasm and labour.

Soon afterwards the railway reached Jubbulpore, and Lyall writes to his mother that

> the far-off roar at night of the coming train reminds me of Harbledown on a summer evening. Well, I am very glad to have seen the old India of long-stretching rides far into the night, and of incessant galloping night and day in a perilous mail-cart—when distance had to be overcome quickly; but it is a grand benefit never more to have to drag ladies and children for days along bad roads and across unbridged ravines—when the Government was pleased to transfer you from place to place.
>
> I am spending a Sunday out on the Nerbudda, at a place called the Marble Rocks. . . . It is a most wonderful place, but descriptions are stupid by letter. . . . The water in the big pool just at my feet is fresh and clear—we have been watching a crocodile that has stationed himself under water at the ford. He is easily seen from our high rock, but below

he is probably invisible. . . . Just above us is the grave of a poor fellow who was drowned here by the wild bees: he was out shooting in a boat, and disturbed their nest—they drove him into the water and drowned him.

Lyall was not left many weeks at Jubbulpore, for in July, six weeks after his arrival, he heard that he was to go for a year or so to a place called Akola, to act as Commissioner of West Berar. This was one half of a large tract of country taken over from the native state of Hyderabad in payment for the upkeep of a disciplined force placed at the disposal of its Chief. Berar, according to Lyall's description, was about the size of Greece, with a larger population, and for a young man of thirty-two the position was a fine one. But Akola itself was at that time out of the way and dull, and he could not help repining at the move.

I am reluctantly preparing to leave this pleasant place [he writes to his mother], and to go down into the bare hot plains of Berar, all for money. I don't like the prospect at all, for my headquarters will be at a small station, and I have nearly lost what capacity I had for living by myself, but I cannot stop short on my road out here. . . . So I must make up my mind to a dreary year before me.

And he proceeded once more to break up his establishment, after the manner of India, selling off his furniture and other heavy things, and starting his horses and servants and carts for a long march in the rainy weather.

As a matter of fact, he never returned to the Central Provinces, and Akola was to be his head-

quarters for a long time to come, but that he did not know; so he settled down for his year of solitude on "a wide upland, with a few bungalows dotted here and there," congratulating himself that his wife and children had been spared the rough journey. As he truly said, he had "no great liking for children"—it was one of his weak points—and a journey in India with his family was misery to him; "but in my own way I used to think the two infants pleasant little things, and I often miss them when I come home about dusk." He tells his sister that he is just now in good spirits, being a very successful civilian; but as usual he is in two minds about it all. His friend Elliott is

"enraged at my longings after the society and the fleshpots of Jubbulpore, so I suppose I was right to come here;" but nevertheless "I have been thinking lately that without doubt I should have done better to go to Cambridge. . . . India is just tolerable at a large station, but I have contracted an antipathy to outposts. Of course I need not stay here, for I have four districts under me, and I shall go rushing about to keep off ennui, but still I am wasting my short lifetime, and I doubt whether the money is worth it."

This is the note which now gets stronger with him year after year. The novelty and romance of India had faded, and his restless spirit was chafing in its bonds. It is doubtful whether in reality he would not have been much more restless and discontented if he had remained in England. He enjoyed English life thoroughly afterwards, when he was tired of jungle and tent,—when the intellectual and literary

side of his nature had become predominant; but in his younger days the uneventful round of existence in Europe would have tried him severely. However, he advises his sister not to send her son to India.

The son was Bernard Holland, who had just gone to Eton, and Lyall writes about this—

> Certainly I don't envy poor little Bernard, for at 11 years the return from home to school gave me sheer anguish, but then I did not get on socially at school until I was about 14. I think that we inflict on boys much unnecessary pain; they gain very little by going early to school, and suffer a good deal. Of nothing am I so persuaded as of the error committed by overteaching boys. They learn nothing at all, except merest rudiments, until about 15; from 15 to 20 they learn a good deal of superficial knowledge, which they forget altogether if they leave books after 20. From 20 to 30 is the real education time of man, and the reason why you women are mostly uneducated is that you finish before 20, and don't go on, having no object in doing so. But take my advice and train Bernard's body carefully. Really it is as useful in life to be able to ride as to know most sciences, while a general knowledge of games brings a youth to the front wonderfully in society, but *riding* is of immense value.

It does not seem that Lyall greatly altered his views on these points in later life.

In the same letter he sends his young nephew a Homeric parody, the piece printed in his first collection of 'Verses Written in India,' under the title of "Sky Races in the Grecian Camp before Troy." "Paste it into some book," he says; "I have no other copy."

In September 1867 he writes to his mother from

one of his outlying districts — he was presumably "rushing about to keep off ennui"—and asks her to keep very much to herself her pleasure at his success,

for you are aware how utterly uninteresting such petty triumphs are to our general acquaintances, more especially how indifferent English relatives are to the doings of Anglo-Indian connections. After all, I have only had one or two successive turns of good-luck. . . . If I had never met Temple, I should be nowhere in the race for promotion; and you will laugh at my conceit when I say that I secretly believe that he has pushed me on not more for my ability to work than because I am what I have heard him call a "presentable" man—he meant—what did he mean?

The question may be answered in the words of a man who knew Lyall well about that time—

His figure was slight and wiry, and he had the appearance of being tall. He moved well, and sat a horse well. His head was that of a Konkani Brahmin, his eyes were wonderful, and he had an indescribable charm which attracted men and women alike. His way of speaking was very courteous, and some thought studied. Although he unbent with his intimates, he was generally dignified and reserved. We would sometimes laugh and say he had the manners of an ambassador.

Temple came of an old family, and had a certain liking for presentable men; so that Lyall's belief was probably correct enough. But Temple was above all an enthusiastic administrator, and would never have pushed on a man who was not thoroughly efficient in his work. However this may be, Lyall would have been better pleased if his success had not been due so entirely to Temple. The foundation, he thought, was too narrow to be solid. Nor did he find

Temple altogether congenial. In one letter about him Lyall writes—and all who knew him must admit the accuracy of the touch: "He cackled with hideous laughter when he found that half a dozen of us had lost all our money in the Bombay Bank, and he told me that he never did such things." Laughter on such subjects is apt to be irritating, and it must be allowed that Temple was not exceptionally tactful. Nevertheless Lyall had a real respect for his uprightness of character, and for his powers of work.

In September of this year, 1867, Lyall wrote to inform his mother that he had been confirmed in his new appointment, and was now a substantive Commissioner, so that before he was thirty-three he had reached almost the highest grade of the administrative service. He had now under his charge four districts, governed by officers much senior to himself; and his income was £3000 a-year. He certainly had little reason to be dissatisfied with his position in life.

He had written not long before the piece which is to be found among his 'Horatian Reminiscences,' under the heading "Aequam memento rebus in arduis." Apparently it was first published in a miscellany brought out by a knot of young civilians and soldiers. In a letter to his mother about his desire for a visit to England in the following year, he writes—

What puzzles me is your saying, "Much as I desire to see you, I cannot wish you to incur the expense of a journey for six months," just what used to strike me in my poor father's

affectionate letters—he never could keep from his imagination the ghost of unthrift. . . . I make sober calculation when I assert that I *could* do nothing better with my money than spend it in visiting you next year. I suppose money is to be spent to buy what one most values, and I value the trip to England most.

And he asks her to read his poem—"it contains in epitome the life philosophy of this benighted pagan."[1]

The year 1868 opens for Lyall with a retrospect of the past five years, since his last visit to England, and he says that what pleases him most is the great extent of country which he has traversed—

> I have been marching every cold season, and almost always in a different district or province, so that although very many have seen more of the high roads of India—have taken a wider range of travel—yet I believe that very few have seen the interior of so many districts.

It was just this experience which was so useful to Lyall, and gave him his intimate knowledge of native life and character. He was very tired of tent life, and he found Akola terribly dull even for India, but these dull years in the jungles completed the work of the Mutiny. And, at the same time, they gave him leisure for writing. He tells his mother that he had been contributing to a paper several rather grotesque articles on the value of Human Life. One would like to see them, for the subject was well suited to his rather cynical humour; but

[1] "Soon you must leave your favourite wold,
And the pleasant villa by Isis laved,
And the heir will reckon your piles of gold,
Hardly won, and thriftily saved."

they are probably buried in the back files of 'The Pioneer' or 'Times of India.' Referring in the same letter to his Homeric translation, he observes—

It is not, as you say, exactly a parody—it is more an attempt to render the spirit of the original in a modern shape—it is impossible to describe to you how Homer kicks off his grand epic buskins and becomes a mere enthusiastic sporting man when he gets among horses. Nothing is more delightful than the way he gets excited in the passage which I have translated:

> "But when they had reached the turn of the course,
> Far on the shore by the breakers' foam,"

and I hope that Bernard may some day feel the "wild pulsation" which somehow the rush of thoroughbreds stirs up in every true Englishman. Anyhow he will read the Iliad of Homer, which is worth all the rest of the world's poetry, except two or three masterpieces. You remember that even Chapman's translation inspired about the finest sonnet ever written, that one by Keats ending—

> "Or like stout Cortez when with eagle eyes
> He stared at the Pacific—and all his men
> Look'd at each other with a wild surmise—
> Silent, upon a peak in Darien."

I am bound to say that in Lyall's letter these lines are shockingly misquoted — a good example of the tricks which memory plays the man who does not verify his references. I have taken upon myself to restore the original words. The Homeric piece is omitted from the published volume of Lyall's poems.

At this time he had also finished another piece of literary work, which, though official, a Berar Census Report, contained some matter not usually found in

official reports. This was a dissertation on sects and religions, and he had contemplated writing from it an essay on the beliefs of the Hindus. The Berar Census Report, which he sent in with an apology "for entering upon matters Theological," was in fact the germ of the 'Asiatic Studies,' afterwards perhaps the best known and most valuable of his published writings.

A few days later he is on the point of starting for England, and, of course, he grows uneasy.

> Somehow, as the idea of England gets closer and closer, the enchantment of the far-off prospect begins to fade—my recollections of the former visit grow more distinct—and I recall mistakes, mishaps, and the ennui of country life without occupation.

That was very like Lyall. In spite of his restlessness and love of change, the actual setting out upon an expedition, however easy, invariably worried and depressed him. He used to conjure up all sorts of unpleasant possibilities, and half wish he were not going. Even a visit to England, which in his heart he desired beyond everything, filled him with misgivings at the last moment. It was this curious sensitiveness and touch of pessimism in his character which so many people mistook for infirmity of purpose. As a fact it caused him much unnecessary, at times almost ludicrous, wear and tear of mind; but it never affected his action.

CHAPTER VIII.

SECOND FURLOUGH AND THIRD PERIOD OF INDIAN SERVICE.

1868–1871.

Six months in England—Publishes "Theology in Extremis," September 1868—Sails for India, October 1868—Visit to Hyderabad, 1869—Dislike of jungles and solitude—He defends Temple against attack—Working at Berar Gazetteer—Origin of the Gazetteer of India—Lord Mayo succeeds Lord Lawrence—New Viceroy visits Berar, 1870—Lyall's views about women's rights—Writes "The Land of Regrets"—Visit to Bombay—Furlough, April 1871.

LYALL spent his six months in England much as an Indian official usually spends them, "cruising about the kingdom" on visits to friends, but passing a large part of the time among his own people. Naturally, he was not doing much work; but in one of his letters there is a passage which shows that he had offered something to an English magazine. It was, in fact, his poem, "Theology in Extremis," which was published by the 'Cornhill' in September 1868, and attracted considerable notice. This was the beginning of a long course of writing for publications in England, which went on almost without interruption until his death forty-three years later, and was a distinctive feature of his Indian career. He did well to begin with "Theology in Extremis," for it is perhaps the finest piece of verse he ever wrote. It was his own favourite, and many good judges agreed with him.

Before he sailed for India again he went to Suffolk

for some partridge-shooting, and found the close-cut stubbles very different from old days, "birds terribly wild, that new plan of mowing the crops as if you were shaving the earth's chin has destroyed all cover, and partridge-shooting has now entirely changed its character." But, as a matter of fact, he now cared little about shooting of any kind. Here, in Suffolk, with his sister, Mrs Petre, he left his two elder children; and on the 8th of October he had once more set his face eastward. At Marseilles he felt "heavy at heart as the anchor on being torn from the soil of Europe," but his visit had been a happy one.

I have gained undiluted pleasure from your society [he writes to his mother], since I do not remember one moment of coolness or misunderstanding. . . . I fear I vexed you sometimes by my taste for argumentative fencing, I mean by my way of taking a side and defending it merely as an exercise for amusement, the real truth being that there are many topics on which I have not definitely discovered what I really do think. . . . I am sure that I cost you money, and I feel compunction at the liberal style of your table, which was mostly on my account.

His apologies are considerate; but one may be sure his mother did not grudge the money, or feel any great vexation at the argumentative fencing. It was always a trick of his. He erred, if it was an error, in good company, that of Samuel Johnson.

He landed at Bombay determined to be very careful in his official work, for he had now attained a position above which comparatively few civilians ever rose, and he felt that any false step might ruin his chances of selection for the great prizes of the service. Never-

theless I see that his first letter from Akola deals with literary matters. Before leaving England he had apparently sent to the 'Cornhill' his "Joab," which stands as No. XVI. in the last edition of his Verses. He seems now, for the first time, to have contemplated such a volume, for he says of "Joab": If it be rejected I shall send it to an Indian paper. I think I could in time produce a sufficient number of dramatic sketches in verse to form a small book worth printing in India."

The present Editor of the 'Cornhill' writes that the Magazine published two only of Lyall's pieces, "Theology in Extremis" and the "Hindu Prince and Sceptic." Presumably, therefore, "Joab" was rejected. It may have appeared in an Indian paper.

As usual he soon got tired of the dulness of Akola, and went into camp for Christmas. His letters written about this time contain two pieces of self-analysis which seem interesting. They refer to parting from his children, and to his literary work.

I for one never wish any one to grieve on my account, being conscious myself of no acute pain at such partings. In the world there seems to me to be so much sharper griefs than these temporary separations, that I must confess I regard them little after the first moment. Any thing like an estrangement, or loss of esteem or affection which I value, would touch me a hundred times more. . . .

I do not like marching about because it disarranges my books and papers. Somehow I find more and more occupation as I go on living, and I should do very well if I could overcome a certain fidgety impatience of delays, and a trick of getting tired with any business that wants long application. If I were other-

wise qualified, I think I could not write a book; I should exhaust my interest half-way through the subject. . . . I wish for the energy of those people who write three-volume novels. I myself always get disgusted with any subject after about ten pages.

On these extracts it may be remarked that Lyall came to feel more acutely in after years the partings which form so sad a feature of Indian life. As to his literary capacity, this early judgment is not wholly incorrect. In after life he wrote some good books, but his strength lay rather in essay and review writing than in larger works.

Early in the year 1869 he spent some time in the Native State of Hyderabad, on a visit to the Resident, C. B. Saunders, who was *ex officio* head of the Berar administration, and his immediate superior. It was a long march from Akola over "the wide stony wolds of the Deccan," and it greatly interested Lyall, who for the first time saw something of a great chiefship under native rule. This was a useful experience in various ways, for the Native States were very different from the provinces under British administration, and Hyderabad was the most important of them all, with a territory as large as England, and a population of more than ten millions. At the capital he met the distinguished Minister, Sir Salar Jung, whom he described as "one of the ablest men in India, and withal a high-bred handsome Mahometan, very courteous to Englishmen."

Lyall returned by mail-cart and rail, a roundabout journey of 700 miles, but quicker than the march

across country. He stopped on the way at Poona, where he contrasted the miserable "hotel" with the ceremonious establishments of the old *régime* at Hyderabad. Indian hotels of those days were, as he said, "always nasty, untidy places, where you are tended by unclean natives of the baser sort."

Altogether he was considerably surprised and impressed by what he had seen of the great Moslem chiefship.

After his return to Akola he found himself very busy with the preparation of his annual report, one of the many burdens imposed on the Indian official, and with the ordinary work of his large division; but he escaped the worst of the violent heat by a month's stay in the little hill station of Chiculda, where his wife and child were spending the summer. He was not fond of hill stations, which cut him off from the daily contact with native life; but such breaks are at times the salvation of men who have to toil in an exhausting climate, and he was the better for the change.

In August his friend Charles Elliott passed through Akola on his way to England, recalled by the sudden death of a brother, and Lyall got into the railway carriage and travelled some little way with him,—"a rough-looking irritable man with ten times the softheartedness and sensibility of myself." Yet it was a kindly thing to do. Then, after seeing the train depart into heavy rain and thick darkness, Lyall sits down in the lonely railway station to write

to his mother. He hopes his daughter in England has some notion of music—

> I feel myself a certain grievance against nature, which chooses to send me through a world full of grand music without the capacity to understand it. I am well aware that my taste in music is like the taste of those who admire, say, Longfellow in poetry—a thoroughly fourth-class taste, if not lower.

The remark is quoted because it touches upon one of his peculiarities. He had no better ear for music than he had for languages. The two things are, no doubt, quite distinct, and a man may have one without the other. Lyall had neither. Yet in his own way he felt music acutely. I have more than once seen him moved almost beyond control by some sudden touch in a song. As to the American poet, Lyall became in later life much less impatient of Longfellow's simple sentiment and want of finish than he had been when he was a younger man. He spoke to me in that sense on the occasion of the Longfellow centenary in 1906. But it was a class of poetry which never really appealed to him.

On the 22nd of August Akola was enlivened by a cricket-match against another station, and Lyall's mind was divided between official and sporting cares. "Much rain falls, good for cotton, bad for cricket;" but he was now looking forward to another visit to England in 1871, and was already beginning to count the time like a schoolboy. Early in October he writes that his house in Chiculda has been much damaged by rain, but he takes it calmly. "Our busy

season will begin in a fortnight. I have many places to go to, and much to do, if I am well the next six months will fly fast, and then there will be only twelve months before I go home again." His letters touch more than once upon the vain longings of Indian officials for England, and the disappointment in which they usually end, yet he cannot refrain from them.

At this time he was not apparently writing much.

> I wish I could make some more verses [he says to his mother], but I have been struck dull ever since I got back to India, and my leisure intervals are apt to be invaded by low spirits. Now I detest what people call subjective poetry, the setting forth of your inner feelings in verse, unless you can set them in some new and striking frame of circumstance.

The instinct was surely a right one. He knew how artificial and useless—if not mischievous—such poetry is apt to be. One of the chief merits of his own verse was that it rested on less shadowy foundations. Whatever its faults, it was never mere dream work.

When the rainy season was over, the first breath of cold autumnal air gave him as usual a restless desire to be off to camp. "Yet every year I dislike the jungle and solitude more and more, and look toward congenial society as the only pleasure I may hope for in life." This was the feeling that grew stronger and stronger upon him as life went on. Meanwhile he begged his mother to send him good French books, memoirs or histories. As he told her, he read history

more willingly than anything else. It is curious to see how his mind, which was reflective, and indeed imaginative, beyond most, yet seemed always hungry for facts. Fiction, unless redeemed by a specially artistic setting, always wearied him. It was like the detested subjective poetry—unreal, and therefore unattractive.

The year gave him an opportunity of showing what was always a remarkable and very admirable characteristic of his—a certain vehement indignation against injustice. His old chief, Sir Richard Temple, had lately got into difficulties with regard to the financial policy of the Government of India, which he was then conducting, and Lyall was stirred to wrath by what seemed to him the unfair and merciless attacks which appeared in some of the Indian newspapers. In these circumstances he felt compelled to act, and though precluded by his official position from coming out into the open, he sent to the Editor of a leading Indian paper, which had often published contributions from him, a fiery letter of protest. This letter, which was itself unjust to men whom he did not know, is not of any importance now; but it did credit to his generosity and courage. He writes to his mother about it: "I am much concerned now about Sir R. Temple, whose financial ministry has not succeeded as yet; he has bitter enemies, and I am shedding the best ink in my bottle on his behalf." Whether the protest affected the tone of the paper he does not say, and Temple's rather tough skin did not perhaps suffer

from the attacks made upon him as much as Lyall supposed; but the attitude which he took in this matter, verbally and in writing, is pleasant to see. Most men stand aside in such cases. With him, though few suspected it, the sight of a man in undeserved trouble was enough to make him do at once what he could do to help. He required no appeal for aid, and looked for no thanks. It is not a common quality; and in a man whose personal affections, though deep, were not broad-cast,—"a rather callous man," as he calls himself,—it was specially remarkable.

Of course he was by this time getting very weary of Akola, never having before held an appointment half so long; but he was bringing out a Berar Gazetteer, which interested him. Though it was, as he told his mother, full of Indian matter uninteresting to English readers, it was a rather striking departure in official work; and it not only did much to increase his growing reputation, but was one of the earliest examples from which grew the various provincial Gazetteers, and the great Gazetteer of India, edited by Sir William Hunter. The exact circumstances in which the idea originated are described by Rivett-Carnac in his book, and, as there has been some misconception on the subject, his words are quoted—

> At a recent meeting of the Royal Society of Arts, held to commemorate the completion of a new edition of this Imperial Gazetteer, Sir Alfred Lyall, who was in the chair, corrected the incorrect views expressed that the Indian Gazetteers owed their origin to Sir William Hunter. Sir Alfred said—and having been Commissioner at Nagpore the circumstance must

have been well known to him—that the Gazetteers were first started in the Central Provinces in Sir Richard Temple's time, and that the suggestion to compile these records came from me. This is quite correct.

. . . . . .

Temple highly approved the idea, and, if I remember aright, it was talked over with Alfred Lyall and Charles Elliott when we met them both a few days later in the Hoshungabad District. The orders then went forth for the compilation of what was the Gazetteer of the Central Provinces, and which was edited by Charles Grant. Later Alfred Lyall undertook the Gazetteer for Berar. The Government of India did not fail to appreciate the merit of these beginnings, and, determining to extend the system to the whole of India, put Hunter in charge of the work. Until then he had no connection with the undertaking, and had no hand in it until after the Gazetteers of both the Central Provinces and Berar had been compiled and published.

Rivett-Carnac explains that a Major Baldwin, who was in charge of one of the districts of the Central Provinces, had, of his own accord, compiled a sheaf of notes "regarding nearly everything in his district"; and that this was the germ of the whole system.

During this year Lyall received, and greatly enjoyed, a visit from his brother James, who was doing well as a civilian in the Punjab;[1] but his mother noticed a tone of depression in his letters. For instance, he writes to her—

I have missed one or two things in life which I might have got—though, I suppose, every one would say the same. And

[1] Temple had tried to "crimp" James Lyall, too, for the Central Provinces; but the answer had been, "He is the very best of our young men, and don't you wish you may get him?"

so when I sit down to write I begin to meditate, and when I meditate I fall into melancholy.

Still, on the whole, he is contented enough.

I am very busy out here just now, and I am not at all sure that this is not where I am most happy. I rather despair of ever finding steady occupation in England.

He had been invited to spend Christmas at Calcutta, where there was to be a great gathering of all the magnates of the land to meet the new Viceroy, Lord Mayo, who was succeeding Lord Lawrence. Lyall thought it a good chance of emerging from his jungles and making the acquaintance of the powers that were. But there is in his letters no description of this Christmas visit, and nothing to show that it ever took place. At all events, in February 1870 Lyall was back in Akola — preparing for the reception of the Viceroy there. Lord Mayo was to visit Berar, chiefly in connection with the cotton trade; and though viceregal visits are, as a rule, expensive and troublesome to local officers, Lyall looked forward to this one as a break in the dulness of Akola. It went off successfully enough. Lyall's house and tents were full for ten days. The new Viceroy charmed everyone, as he always did, opened a new railway to Khaṇḍgaun, a great cotton mart, made a fine speech about it for the benefit of Manchester, and departed; leaving Lyall with a bad headache, and with the usual business of his division "severely damaged and delated," but thankful all was over.

The story of this railway was a curious one. It

was, I believe, the first State Railway in India. Rivett-Carnac, who was now Cotton Commissioner, had been entrusted by Lord Mayo with the carrying out of the work. The engineer appointed by the Public Works Department reported the task impossible in the time allowed. Lyall came to the rescue with a young Stanley engineer, Izat, who pushed the matter through.[1] When they had succeeded, Lyall wrote to Rivett-Carnac—

I think you have managed admirably, and I have conceived still greater respect than before for your capacity of putting things straight and driving them on. I am quite sure that very few men would have acted with such energy, and that you deserve all the credit for the railway from [the ?] beginning.

This is a good instance of the generous way in which he acknowledged the work of others.

Meanwhile he had written and sent to his mother an article on Mill's 'Subjection of Women.' He never thought much of Mill's reasoning; and in later life he was strongly opposed to Women Suffrage; but at this time he was inclined to regard English women as hardly used.

I rather conjecture that on the whole, and in the present state of society, the perfect equality of sexes may be best for all. It will save women from a good deal of ridicule which is at present thrown by fools and cowards on those who are ugly, or peculiar, or merely poor. When women meet men on plain equality, with no special privileges or disabilities, an ugly woman will be no more mocked at than an ugly man.

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[1] Now Mr Alexander Izat, C.I.E., the well-known railway engineer.

His mother evidently did not share his views, for a little later he writes—

I am in despair that I cannot get you to believe in women's rights and capacities. It is most vexatious that the women who are living proofs of my argument should attempt to deny it; a capable woman cannot prove women to be incapable, she refutes her own words.

In July 1870 he writes to Mrs Holland, not very seriously, in the same sense. He advocates women's rights and responsibilities as the only way of enforcing better education, for "nothing can be more lamentable than the low mental development of the average British lady."

By this time he had written "The Land of Regrets," which will be found in his published verses.

I hope you will understand [he says to Mrs Holland] that "The Land of Regrets" was something of a cynical parody. I have no such pangs myself, though, on the whole, I wish I had gone to Cambridge. But the youth of the Civil Service have lately set up dismal wailings, and I gave them those verses to comfort them. Young Competition Wallah comes out much elated at having won his appointment, and prepared to distinguish himself at once among the provincials, also he marries very early, so he soon gets worn by the drudgery and pinched by poverty. Haileybury youth generally felt astonished that any one could think them worth paying £500 yearly, and beguiled the weary years of juniority by spending twice as much. By the time you are forty a quiverful of children is rather a heavier burden than a lump of debts contracted by a *jeunesse orageuse*, and you have had your fun for your debts.

He was impressed at this time with the pettiness of Colonial affairs and interests as compared with the scale of Indian administration.

Berar is just the size of the Kingdom of Greece, with a much larger population, yet it is an obscure province. Port Natal Colony, which has a Governor to itself, is about equal in wealth and population to my best district, &c., &c. With such thoughts do I console myself here at Akola.

He was further consoling himself with writing articles for Indian newspapers, and he had sent to one of his sisters, for an English magazine, an article on "Paneeput," a great Indian battlefield, which article, however, he was inclined to think hardly good enough. I have not been able to trace it. Finally he writes on his old subject of religion—

Why on earth are all the Divines making much of Keshub Chunder?[1] He says nothing new. Theodore Parker said it all before, and it has no particular meaning. Now the New Testament does at least mean something, and it is in earnest about what it tells us, but the truth is that these windy moralities of the Baboo are just the atmosphere which suits such drifting Deans as Stanley and Alford. I have long known Brahmoism,—it teaches no small contempt for the Christian doctrine.

In the autumn of 1870 Lyall went down to Bombay, his wife being ill and in need of a change. The trade of the place was suffering much from the Franco-German

[1] Babu Keshub Chunder Sen, the well-known reformer of the Brahmo Somaj, was then on a visit to England. His pleasant manners and ready eloquence gave him considerable success.

war, and the visit was depressing. He was troubled as usual, being idle, by what he calls unreasonable restlessness. He tells his mother that "Reading does not satisfy that feeling, writing does, but then as one lives one perceives how very little one can write worth writing." And he proceeds to meditate over his prospects, which leads him to the conclusion that he is stranded in Berar for some years, having got through the ordinary grades of promotion, and that he can look only to a stroke of luck for deliverance from his rather dull corner.

He soon returned to work again. In March 1871 he was once more in the great cotton mart at Khangaun. It was the height of the cotton season, and every one was "buying, weighing, ginning, pressing, and packing, . . . French, English, and German merchants, . . . who all stifle their animosities under bales of cotton." The whole thing had always bored him; but it was part of his duty as Commissioner, and he had to repress his feelings.

So, in rather uncongenial work, ended Lyall's third term of Indian service. A few weeks later he had sailed for England, intending, as there was no immediate prospect of promotion, to take long leave. He had now been fifteen years in the Indian service, and was thirty-six years of age. Though promotion had stopped for a time, he had done well, and had acquired an exceptional knowledge of the real India,—the India of the agricultural districts. Moreover, his contributions to the press, and to official literature of

the better sort, had brought him a certain reputation as a writer. With the rupee at two shillings he was pecuniarily in comfort; and his health, though never robust, had not seriously suffered. Altogether, he had no reason to complain.

CHAPTER IX.

THIRD FURLOUGH IN ENGLAND, AND FOURTH PERIOD OF INDIAN SERVICE.

1871–1874.

Summer at Windsor, 1871—Winter in London—Begins to write for 'The Fortnightly'—Henry Reeve—Grant Duff—Fitzjames Stephen—Henry Maine—John Morley—Visits to Paris and Manchester—Sails for India, October 1872—Sees Lord Northbrook—Offer of Home Secretaryship, February 1873—Lyall joins Home Department in Calcutta—Position of Indian Secretaries—Goes up to Simla, April 1873—Death of Rowland Cockerell—Famine in Bengal—Arthur Hobhouse—Max Müller and the Science of Religions, 1874—Lyall appointed Agent to the Governor-General in Rajputana, October 1874.

LYALL passed the summer of 1871 at Windsor, among the scenes of his boyhood, very happy in the society of his brothers and sisters, who came to stay with him; but winter found him established in London, reading and working up some of the literary material which he had accumulated.

He had now made the acquaintance of Henry Reeve, editor of 'The Edinburgh Review,' who apparently showed him considerable kindness, and gave him some introductions to people of note in Paris. This had always been a favourite place with him, and it was at the moment specially interesting on account of the late war with Germany and the events of the Commune. There, in the early part of 1872, he spent a short time in a manner very agreeable to him, meeting various political personages at the Duc d'Aumale's soirées; listening in the National Assembly

to Gambetta's fiery attacks on the Right; wondering at the savage caste hatred of the middle classes for the proletariat; and, after his usual fashion, "loitering terribly about the streets." Then he returned to London, and set to work at his writing.

The most important feature, for him, of this period of leave in England was his introduction to several men of mark, who afterwards had much influence upon the course of his life. On arrival he had met, and had some talk with, Grant Duff,[1] who was then at the India Office, and in June 1872, to judge from the post-mark on his envelope, for his letter is dated only "Sunday, midnight," he writes to Mrs Holland—

Fitzjames Stephen[2] very civilly came over here one morning (I had written to propose a call on him), and sat with me more than an hour. I liked him much, and I think that at least we amused each other; he has that turn for clear free opinions, with an edge on them, which greatly attracts me. I am struck by the immense advantage to us Indians of getting such men to go out to India; the professional old Indian is without honour in this country, and is supposed to have all sorts of prejudice and *esprit de corps*. But when Maine[3] and Stephen come home with strong views on our side, and strong impressions upon the real state of affairs in the East, the public listens to *them*.

In the same letter Lyall tells his sister that he is going down "to stay a day with Morley,[4] the

[1] The Right Honourable Sir Mountstuart Elphinstone Grant Duff, Governor of Madras, G.C.S.I., &c.

[2] The Honourable Sir J. Fitzjames Stephen, Bart., K.C.S.I., Legal Member of the Viceroy's Council, and afterwards Judge of the High Court.

[3] Sir Henry Sumner Maine, K.C.S.I., who was also at one time in India as legal member of the Viceroy's Council.

[4] Now Viscount Morley of Blackburn.

Fortnightly' editor, who proposes to make personal acquaintance." This was the beginning of a friendship which lasted for nearly forty years, until Lyall's death, and had a great influence not only on his literary work but, as he believed, on his official career. He had then written two articles for the 'Fortnightly,' the first in February 1872, on "Our Religious Policy in India"; the second in April, on "The Religion of an Indian Province"; and he was working at a third, on "The Religious Situation in India," which appeared in the following August. They were the forerunners of several more.

Later in the year Lyall went down to Manchester, to attend a great dinner which was being given by the Chamber of Commerce to his old friend of the Central Provinces, Rivett-Carnac, who was then in charge of the operations of the Government of India for the development of cotton cultivation. Rivett-Carnac refers to the visit in his 'Many Memories.' It was on this occasion that I first met Lyall, with whom I was afterwards to be closely associated in India. I do not think he was one of the speakers at the dinner, for he never made speeches if he could avoid them; and I do not remember that I had much talk with him; but from that time we knew each other.

Writing for the 'Fortnightly,' and making new friends in London; lamenting "the grievous waste of the finest race of women in the world that incessantly goes on here"; shooting partridges, rather against the grain; and greatly enjoying the society of his mother and sisters,—Lyall remained in England

until the autumn of 1872. Then once more he sailed for the East, and by the beginning of November he had resumed charge at Akola.

It was a place he had never liked, and he took up his work again without enthusiasm. He had now been Commissioner of West Berar for five years; and though he had spent about two years of that time in England, he was very desirous of a transfer to some less out-of-the-way appointment. "But," he writes to Rivett-Carnac, "I do not see the most distant prospect of it; for even Saunders does not seem inclined to further my views in that direction." Saunders, the Resident in Hyderabad, doubtless knew he had got a very useful man in his Commissioner, and was loth to lose his services. Lyall had seen the new Viceroy, Lord Northbrook, at Bombay, and found him "cool, clever, and good at business, but as yet more like an English official than an Asiatic ruler." And the great dispenser of patronage had, naturally, made no sign. So Lyall went into camp, not complaining, but not hopeful.

Promotion cometh slowly to all [he writes to Mrs Holland]; I have had my share; and the special appointments are like unto the pool of Siloam, unless one is on the spot at the nick of time another steps in first. . . . I am . . . meditating another article for the 'Fortnightly,' but my mind gets much dispersed by official pursuits; and I am bothered out in camp by little naked black men with agricultural grievances which no one else will take the trouble to hear. . . . I got a book parcel by last mail, tore it open eagerly as one does in the jungle. Tracts, by Jingo! a translation from some German on the evidences of Christianity, . . . alack, I am far beyond

the evidences by special pleading and argument of learned Europeans; you cannot imagine the disintegrating effect upon one's faith in Paley's Evidences and Butler of a careful survey of religions in the East.

We have been wandering in tents for the last three weeks; plenty to do, but nothing new; I look after the Courts, the revenue, the roads, the public buildings, the public feelings—and anything else that it imports a Government to see to,—and the days go fast enough. We have been for three days encamped on the brink of a huge hollow or basin, four miles round, and 420 feet deep, with steep sides, and at the bottom a lake full of salt and soda,—it is guessed to be an extinct crater of ages ago. My business has been to arrange for working the salts to the profit of the State, and I want to introduce scientific methods, but it seems that the salts have supported a race of divers, who grope for the crystals under the water, for centuries; and that all the deities whose temples surround this wonderful basin have a vested share in the profits allotted to them to secure their aid in the diving. So God and man are against my innovations; and I, being at heart conservative, repent me that I ever advised the State to meddle. I have been surrounded by petitions and protests. It is a *most* curious natural phenomenon, this lake, and on the highest point above it is a really beautiful old temple, which I have cleared from the mould of centuries as some small propitiation to the insulted deities. I am now going farther westward, shall be back at Akola about the middle of February. Soon after that I shall make an expedition into the hill country north of Berar, and thence retire to Chiculda late in April. Plenty to do, but I am tired of the jungle; Berar is not bad for the cold season; and I have yet to try the heat again after my return this time from Europe. I nourish some faint hope of a transfer from Berar within a year or 18 months; but I have no reason for hoping beyond the idea that I may be gradually acquiring some claim on the good offices of the governing people. I rather doubt being able to get out of the comparative obscurity of this province.

But his wanderings in camp, and his dull years in Berar, were now drawing to a close; for on the day that he was writing the words above quoted, Lord Northbrook's private secretary, Major Evelyn Baring,[1] was writing that the permanent appointment of Home Secretary to the Government of India would shortly be vacant, and that Lord Northbrook had desired him to offer it to Lyall. It need hardly be said that Lyall saw in this offer the chance of distinction, and of escape from the jungles, for which he had long been hoping, and he accepted it by telegram without hesitation. To Rivett-Carnac, who had written to congratulate him, he answers: "Of course I am lucky beyond calculation, and have now got all that I can possibly wish; it only remains to see how I shall do the work." Other letters are in the same strain. Shortly before, in writing to one of his sisters, he had used words which more nearly approach to a boast—a very rare thing to find in his usually modest letters. "If I could get one more lift into the current of things, out of this honourable backwater, I would pull the rest with my own oars." He had got his lift, and was now to make good his words.

It has been said that his connection with the 'Fortnightly' and its Editor had, in his belief, a great influence on his official career. Perhaps the offer of the Home Secretaryship was an illustration of this. No doubt the offer was largely due to the advice of Major Baring, a very shrewd judge of men, who

[1] Now the Earl of Cromer.

on meeting Lyall had at once formed a high opinion of his capacity. But Lyall did not know this, and was at a loss to account for Lord Northbrook's choice. In a letter to John Morley, written in February 1873, offering an article on "Witchcraft" for the 'Fortnightly,' Lyall observes that the offer of the Home Secretaryship was a marvellous piece of luck, and goes on—

I own I believe that the 'Fortnightly' articles had something to do with catching the Viceregal eye, and that I have some valuable friends in England whom those papers also moved to consider me. I say this in order to pay my just debt to the Editor of that very "leading periodical."

Morley's answer shows that there was foundation for Lyall's belief—

I sat next to Sir Louis Mallet the other day, and we talked about you. He said that Grant Duff named you as a promising youth to Lord Northbrook, and sent Ld. N. your pieces in the 'Fortnightly,' and other things; whereupon Ld. N. called to you to come and sit on his right hand. I confess the whole transaction gives me a thoroughly favourable idea of the way in which Indian things are done.

Whether the Indian Services would have entirely appreciated the humour of that reply may perhaps be doubted,—the men who have written much for the English public have not always been among the best and most honest of Indian workers,—but certainly in the particular case the choice was a happy one.

Grant Duff, to whom Lyall sent his thanks, answered that of all the appointments with which he

had been more or less connected none had given him so much pleasure: "it is very seldom one gets an opportunity of helping a man simply and solely because one believes him to be supremely deserving, irrespective of what are technically and quite properly called 'claims'."

These two letters go on to deal with other subjects. Grant Duff closes his with some remarks about Lyall's verses—

I can well understand that having once written "Theology in Extremis," which would do honour to any man who ever wrote in the English tongue, you should be unwilling to write much; but our possession of India has done so ridiculously little for our literature that it is a great pity that one who can do as you have done in that and the "Old Pindaree" should not do more.

The reason why our possession of India has done little for English literature is obvious enough,—that the English in that country, a very small number all told, are mostly officials, and are hard-worked, often very much over-worked, in an exhausting climate. Moreover, they are far away from the literary atmosphere, and do not live surrounded by libraries. But the fact pointed out by Grant Duff is undeniable.

Morley's letter ends with the words—

Your portrait is in an honoured place: it strikes us as excellent. But people say they would not like to meet you in a lonely place in times of mutiny or civil disturbance; there's a "whiff of grapeshot" look about you. I say, "Oh yes! he blows a syce from a gun if his horse is ill-groomed. That's the demoralisation of subject races," &c.

Those who knew Lyall only in his later days will probably find the idea as amusing as Morley seems to have done; but the portrait, whatever it was, did not give a wholly false impression. With all his gentleness and courtesy of manner, Lyall could on occasion be, or seem to be, rather pitiless to evil-doers — not cruel, but unsparing. Even in small matters, in ordinary life, he would at times hit extremely hard—harder than one altogether liked to see—if he thought people required it. He had inherited with his Scottish blood a certain measure of Scottish dourness.

It may be well to quote here, out of place, the earlier part of his letter to Morley—

I have some recollection that you invited me to send you an occasional letter; at any rate I do not want to lose, by any omission of mine, an acquaintance which I hold myself lucky to have made. I reached India on the last day of October last. For some time after my return I was much discontented with my lot, and could not overcome my regret for European life, and for that pleasant land of which we Indians so foolishly think scorn when we leave it in youth; but I set deliberately to Orientalise myself, and to get back into *rapport* with things I see and hear around me; so that I am now pretty well resigned to "do my duty in that state of life," &c. And certainly India is most interesting to those who try hard to understand it; I am always regarding it as the most complete and perfect specimen left to us of the ancient civilised world; it seems to me to explain all sorts of problems of history and religion which bother us so long as we sit at home. The politics, too, are of a kind that strikes one fresh from England; when one gets among the chief official people and hears of princes to be kept in order,

border tribes to be put down, Wahabi treasons, and Kooka uprisings, one begins to realise the sort of business which governing was in former days, when the feeling of "incedis per ignes suppositos cineri doloso" was constantly present to the mind as a condition of imperial rule. However, I believe we are quite safe in India if we make no blunders; though I am very glad that Frederic Harrison is strengthening the hands of those who would boldly proclaim the principle of authority and of government by the fittest. Whatever may be the drawbacks to applying his political theories to England, they, the theories, are exceedingly well adapted to practise in India, where anything like democracy, above all the sham democracy of the crude Bengalee who has no strength behind his words, may yet drive us prematurely into some unlucky collision. That is one small danger ahead from our educated Aryan brethren, though I think it only possible. When I asked a very well-informed and *not* imaginative officer whether there was any possible risk of trouble in the interior of Western India, he said that a great saint might one day arise who should preach a vast religious revival, and might point his texts at us. He meant a Kooka *émeute*, on a very much larger scale, and he told me that one of his best native subordinates had just gone off working miracles and proselytising to a purer faith. But these things get into my head, so that when I write of them I am never sure that I am not dreaming or talking wildly. I have sent you by this post, addressed to Chapman & Hall, an article on "The Relations of Witchcraft to Non-Christian Religions." Here in India one loses the literary sense. I cannot judge whether the paper is good or bad, but I am sure you can, and by your judgment I am quite ready to abide. Nor do I know whether what I say has been said before; you must never forget that India has no libraries up country.

In the course of February 1873 Lyall was on his way to Calcutta, to take over the charge of the

Home Office; and from Allahabad, on his way down, he writes to Mrs Holland—

Here has my luck come all of a sudden. . . . I have left Berar for good, with a feeling of much relief, not that I disliked the province specially, but I was contracting a superstitious notion that I had got jammed into that corner. . . . I seem, however, to have been holding a better hand of cards than I supposed. . . . I might have worked myself into jungle brain-fever without getting anything if I had not gone home in 1871, written 'Fortnightly' articles, and talked to Grant Duff. . . . My friends congratulate, and discover my eminent aptitudes for the post; whether they are right remains to be seen, but I have resolved to be confident at least outwardly, though you know that we brothers and sisters always have a lurking belief that we are impostors about to be found out.

At Calcutta he was kindly received by two well-known members of his service, Horace and Rowland Cockerell, typical Haileybury men, whose well-appointed and hospitable house was always open to their friends. Mrs Lyall went straight up to Simla to prepare their summer headquarters. Soon after Lyall's arrival, a letter of congratulation came to him from his mother, and he writes to her—

Your letter of the 20th gave me great pleasure. I see that I am loved and liked by those whom I most love and like; and that is enough, I don't much care now about the rest. . . . Yes, one lives on the reflections which survive in that mirror of memories, the brain, of pleasant or striking scenes in past life. . . . But the mystery is that totally insignificant scenes every now and then float up to the surface of one's recollections, without one having the faintest notion why they were called up from the vasty deep; and odours recall these things in a poignant way.

Lyall seems to have made a good impression on all with whom he came into contact, and the Indian Press entirely approved his appointment. Nevertheless he was in no way elated by his success, or inclined to think too highly of the prospect before him. He was soon deep in office boxes, for the mass of correspondence in the Home Department was always heavy, and he was by no means sure of his fitness for "expressing other people's thoughts in the language which suits their taste."

It should perhaps be explained that a Home Secretary in India was not in a position of such independence as a Home Secretary in England. The Government of India consisted of the Viceroy and his Council—a small body of five or six members, military and civil—to which the secretaries did not belong. All questions of serious importance were decided by this Government, "the Governor-General in Council," whose orders the secretaries had to carry out; and of late years it had become the custom for each civil member of the council to concern himself specially with one or more of the civil departments, so that, although each secretary had direct access to the Viceroy, he had always in a sense a departmental superior. He was not constitutionally bound to obey, in all respects, orders from the member of council specially concerned with his department; but in practice the member of council exercised much authority, and tended more and more as time went on to assume the position of a Minister in charge of a portfolio. This position was to some extent recognised by statute.

It may be well to note here that Lyall had now definitely come to the conclusion that as a rule an Indian career was a mistake. I was then just beginning my own, and after a few months' experience of Calcutta had decided to resign the service and set to work at the English bar, to which I had been called. A friend with whom I was staying wrote to consult Lyall about this, and his answer was: "I think Durand is right; my deliberate view of the Indian service is that, on an average of chances, it does not pay a man who can earn his living in England." My resignation was not immediately accepted, and circumstances afterwards prevented me from pressing it; but Lyall's clear opinion is worth noting, for the prospects of an Indian civilian have certainly not improved in the last forty years.

In April, at the beginning of the hot weather, Lyall started for Simla. The railway then ran as far as Umballa, near the foot of the mountains, and in the train Lyall passed his old station of Bulandshahr, "looking out for a minute at the familiar road along which we were pursued by hordes of armed villagers in 1857, who shot at us from behind walls and bushes." He goes on to describe, in his first letter from Simla, how after a hot journey of two days and nights in the train, he rode up forty miles by a mountain-path, which meant eleven hours in the saddle, arriving considerably beaten, and rather unwell on account of the change of climate from excessive heat to mountain cold. That was often the effect of a move to the hills,

and probably is so still, though the railway now runs right through. But he soon got over it, and settled down comfortably into a large house, which he and his wife had agreed to share with George Batten of the Civil Service. Lyall's under-secretary, Trevor Plowden, and his beautiful and fascinating wife, mother of the present Countess of Lytton, were also to be of the household. It was an experiment; but, as Lyall told his mother, "they are all good-natured people, except myself. I have for some time perceived that I am not good-natured." Such "chummeries" were then not uncommon arrangements in India. As a matter of fact, if not good-natured, Lyall managed to make himself very agreeable.

He was struck, as all new-comers must be, by the *coup-d'œil* at Simla, but he says in his letter what he used often to say in conversation, that he felt as if the Government were almost dangerously cut off from the vast country below. That feeling always troubled him at hill stations—the sense of being out of touch with the real India. However, for the moment it was pleasant enough.

At first he had nothing to do, for the office boxes had not arrived, so he turned to letter-writing.

I don't think the next generation will make such a coil about religious doubts, or will discuss so warmly the question whether we really know whence we came or whither we go, for the whole difference is really between those who think they know and those who think they don't know; there is no dispute about morals or duties, or about what is pure and beautiful in this world.

I am doing middling well in my work, I don't know that I am doing more, but I am always haunted with the idea of being discovered to be unequal to my reputation, which I perceive to have somehow spread in India. As a writer of official despatches I don't think I am quite up to the mark.

I sit in a large room by myself, and work most of the day, though it would be a mistake in you to suppose that I . . . will ever kill myself by over-work; we are not any of us painful toilers, and we very soon get tired of unbreaking labour. If I only had the energy I could do many things; but here have I totally left off reading and writing in a literary way, because when I have done official work I am too lazy to do anything else. Many men do both.

Lord Northbrook is very civil and kind. I like him much as a man; having respect for his thoroughly clear head, great capacity for mastering points, governmental experience and resolution, and, above all, for his untinctured honesty of purpose. But he is a little too cautious and unimaginative; and he will insist on parliamentary expressions in his writings, being always glad to get hold of a colourless or indifferent phrase, and to call a spade by that name as tenderly as possible. He won't speak straight out, in his orders or resolutions, and say the thing that is, as we in India are accustomed to do. . . . I think he is wrong, and that I could do him good by putting a little warmth and colour into him. . . . We are told that Argyll's Duke is sick of the India Office; I should regret his departure, for he leaves us alone, "en grand seigneur," and does not bother about details. India is quiet, and Lord Northbrook a good Tory in Indian politics; if we can only leave the people alone and not bother them with newfangled ideas we shall not "bust up" just yet. But no one should expect that for many a day we can blow the horn in India without hand on sword.

In the autumn of this year his friend Rowland

Cockerell, who had come up to Simla on leave, was killed by the fall of his horse over a cliff. They had been at Eton and Haileybury together; and on the morning of the 9th October Cockerell had started from Lyall's house for a ride into the mountains. He was brought back dead, and was laid in Lyall's room until the funeral. Lyall was deeply distressed at the accident, for he liked the two brothers, and he knew how devoted they were to each other. Referring to this and the death of another friend, he writes to Mrs Holland—

And the complete vanishing of a familiar spirit is always marvellous and awful, . . . the sudden flight of a well-known and understood intelligence sets one wondering at the mystery of the thing, and I hold that all simple religions are born out of wondering at the mystery of life and death.

I am rather pleased that the philosophers leave you much where you were before, so does all reading leave me little changed; I can find nothing that makes me less forlorn, as you find nothing that troubles your clear air. I see that Herbert Spencer is muddling away among books, instead of understanding men; and I perceive that a religion without divinity is no religion at all, whatever else it may be. I couldn't make any one understand the effect which has been produced upon me by close study of Indian creeds, and I don't want to try; but to me Strauss seems to be as far from the truth as, or a good deal farther than, Archdeacon Denison.

Nobody has a word against my elevation, while there was a good deal of applause in the newspapers; and Lord Northbrook, like all English, thinks a good deal of what the Press say. My old relations with the Anglo-Indian Press help me much here; of course I never write anything now, but I know editors and such folk a little.

During the cold weather of 1873-74, owing to the failure of the monsoon rains, there was considerable anxiety about the prospect of a famine in Bengal, and though as Home Secretary Lyall had no direct official connection with relief operations, he was of course much interested in the subject. His view was that there had been a great deal of unnecessary alarm and waste of money, and that the wild talk of certain English newspapers about millions starving was extremely mischievous. Any one who had to work in the famine districts knows how true this view was. Money was poured out like water, and a large portion of it was thrown away. But there was comparatively little loss of life, which was the main thing to be considered, and some useful lessons were learned for the future. Much credit was gained by Lord Northbrook, who in Lyall's opinion managed things very well and adroitly, and by Lyall's old chief Sir Richard Temple, who as director of famine operations found full scope for his vehement energy. A careful study of the work done then was of use to Lyall when not long afterwards he had to deal with the same difficulties in another part of India.

Meanwhile he had got firmly seated in the Home Office saddle, and was pleased with his position.

My own business goes on very well. One soon discovers whether one is considered in one's own department of public affairs, and whether one has a fair weight of influence. I think I am getting what belongs to my position, and that is all I want. . . . I see a good deal of the Hobhouses,

whom I like very much. Arthur Hobhouse[1] is a man of great power; and I study the style in which he handles questions. I don't think he yet understands India so well as Fitzjames Stephen; but he is infinitely superior to the majority of us.

Lyall exchanged literary ideas with Hobhouse, to the satisfaction of both. They lived in the same street at Calcutta and met very often.

That summer, to avoid unnecessary expense and for other reasons, Lord Northbrook gave up the usual move of the Indian Government to Simla, and, in common with the whole official headquarters, Lyall remained in the moist heat of Calcutta. In spite of this, and of his steady round of official work, he found time to write; and the 'Fortnightly' of July 1874 contained an article from his pen on "Missionary Religions," which is of permanent value. It criticised the views of Max Müller, who was then at the height of his reputation, and Max Müller's reply was appended to it. The tone of the reply is very considerate to a little known writer; but the fact is that Max Müller's "Science of Religions" was not too substantial, and that against Lyall's criticisms, based on practical study and knowledge, Max Müller was rather hard pressed to maintain his argument. Morley welcomed Lyall's article cordially. "It is a thoroughly good work," he wrote, "to check our literary theory-mongers by the results of observation *in situ*." But Lyall was always self-critical.

[1] Legal Member of the Viceroy's Council, and afterwards Lord Hobhouse.

"I rather fancy," he writes to his sister, "my style is still a little exuberant in imagery, and over-coloured — not simple enough — and I want above all to avoid an 'ambitious' style." The article was afterwards republished in 'Asiatic Studies.'

In the same letter he writes—

I confess that I think dogmatic theology will be extinct, or nearly so, a century hence among the cultivated classes, but what will replace it nobody knows. The man who does the most harm, among the average middle classes, to the popular creeds, is Leslie Stephen. He is the Cobbett of religious controversy; his straight-hitting, pungent essays circulate largely, . . . and they are very effective, like Voltaire, in destroying respect for the dogmas.[1]

Now without the dogmas you can't hold a faith together long; though such men as Maurice and Llewellyn Davies may bale out the water for a time, yet when you have knocked away the literal beliefs the ship's ribs are broken, and she is sinking.

The letter goes on to speak of his sister's son, who was then a boy at Eton.

I am glad Bernard continues to be sent up for good. . . . You will have explained to him that success in life belongs to those who can master details without being mastered by them, and that "finish" is the perfection of style, in action as in writing. What the English excel in, where they do excel, is finish; just see how they turn out a ship, a racer, or a steam-engine. . . . Tell him to be accurate in his scholarship. He is sure to imbibe that feeling for style and classic form which

[1] The reference is no doubt to 'An Agnostic's Apology,' and other works of the same kind. Lyall's words show that his father and mother had not been far wrong in old days, from their point of view, with regard to the danger of reading Voltaire.

makes one understand why a bit of poetry lives thousands of years.'

In August, during the rainy season, Lyall went with Lord Northbrook to Assam, in the extreme north-east of India, and had a pleasant and restful tour, chiefly by river in the Viceroy's barge.

Lord Northbrook being very kind and easy in private life, we pass the day mostly in reading, arguing, smoking, with whist in the evening. When I watch the Viceroy shaking hands with the junior officers, and saying a few words to each, at the little stations which we visit, I think of myself in 1860 in a corner of Lord Canning's tent in Rohilcund, and of the trepidation which seized me when he said, "You have seen as much of the Mutiny as most men, Mr Lyall."

If all Indian Viceroys realised, as some do, how closely in the eyes of Englishmen serving in India their position approximates to that of the King in England—what intense satisfaction a few considerate words can give to a man working hard in some lonely station, and what cruel harm can be done by any show of unfairness or impatience,—they would be specially careful about this part of their duties. Sympathy with the services has not always been a marked characteristic of "Government House."

Lyall's term of office as Home Secretary was not to last much longer, for in October he heard that he was to be sent to act for a year as Agent to the Governor-General in Rajputana. Lord Northbrook had decided to appoint him to the Foreign Secretaryship, on the next vacancy; and, in preparation for this post, wished him to make acquaintance with the Native

States of India, which are under the control of the Indian Foreign Office. The Rajputana agency was one of the highest appointments in the Indian "political" or diplomatic service, and to be selected for it was a distinction; but it meant another complete uprooting, and much expense, and Lyall was not altogether pleased at the prospect. Still, he appreciated Lord Northbrook's intention, and looked forward with some satisfaction to a year's relief from the strain of secretariat work, especially night work, which was trying his eyes and his general health.

It does not appear that during his tenure of the Home Secretaryship he had to deal with any specially important question: but the work is never unimportant, and he had gained much in reputation during his time at headquarters.

Perhaps his 'Fortnightly' articles had done him sensible good in this respect; for, as he said, they gave the idea that he was something beyond an official. People used to speak of him as a man outside the ordinary groove. He had made his own mark.

CHAPTER X.

DIPLOMATIC WORK IN RAJPUTANA.

1874–1878.

Native States of India—The Indian political service—The States of Rajputana—Their feudal system—Life in camp—Trial of the Gaekwar of Baroda—Jungle tribes—Mount Abu—Eton education—More 'Fortnightly' articles—Visit of the Prince of Wales to India, 1875-76—Lord Lytton succeeds Lord Northbrook—Lyall writes for 'The Edinburgh Review,' July 1876—Takes leave to England, August 1876—Starts for India again, February 1877—Returns to Mount Abu—War between Russia and Turkey—His sympathy with Russia—Tiger-shooting—Drought in Rajputana—Visit to Simla—Verses—Appointed Foreign Secretary, 1878.

UNTIL 1873 Lyall's Indian life, fortunately for himself, had been spent entirely in administrative work; which brings a man into close daily contact with the natives of India, and gives him a knowledge of the country that nothing else can give. It is, so to speak, the regimental work of the Indian Civil Service. Then for nearly two years he had been on Staff employ as Home Secretary; but even in the Home Office he had had to deal with administrative questions, and most of the papers brought before him referred to matters with which he was more or less familiar. Now he was to undertake altogether new duties.

The Indian Empire is not made up entirely of territories under the direct rule of the British

Government. More than a third of its area consists of protected States, which, for one reason or another, have remained in the hands of native chiefs, and are administered by them under the supervision of the Governor-General in Council. The powers of these chiefs, and the size and population of their States, vary immensely. One of them, the Nizam of Hyderabad, rules, as stated before, a country as large as England, with a population of more than ten millions; and, in common with many other chiefs, has full power of life and death over his own people. Such chiefs cannot make war, or have any direct dealings with foreign nations; but in their own country they have most of the attributes of a sovereign, and the British Government does not control the exercise of their jurisdiction except in case of gross misrule. Then, in the interest of the people, it will step in as paramount power, and will even, if necessary, depose a chief; but such cases are rare. From these great chiefs, with a salute of 21 guns and almost unrestricted sovereign rights, the scale descends to petty rulers of a village or two, whose powers are very small. Between the two ends of the scale are chiefs with every variety of status.

The policy of the British Government towards Native States in general is to interfere no more than is necessary, and to maintain their existence even when their chiefs are punished for misconduct. It is a wise as well as a generous policy, and the wisdom of it was clearly shown in the Mutiny, when the native chiefs, in secure reliance upon the goodwill of the British Government, almost without exception

remained true to the British cause, and acted, to use Lord Canning's words, as breakwaters against the storm.

But, though desirous of interfering as little as possible in the internal administration of the Native States, the Government of India must have means of exercising its duty of general supervision and carrying on its relations with the chiefs. To this end it maintains a diplomatic, or so-called "political," service, the members of which are stationed in the Native States, and act as representatives of the Governor-General in Council. As the English Foreign Office controls the English diplomatic service, so the Indian Foreign Office controls, directly or indirectly, the Indian political service—the two services being nearly equal in point of numbers. The political service has always been largely recruited, as to some extent foreign diplomatic services are, from among military men; but it has also contained a certain proportion of men drawn from the Indian Civil Service; and, as in England, the Government has always reserved to itself the right of filling the highest posts from outside the departmental list. Of course, the English and Indian services differ in many respects. One main difference lies in the fact that the Indian political officer deals ordinarily with States under British protection, whereas the English diplomatist deals with independent Powers. A few Indian political officers are stationed in countries outside India, but the bulk of the service is employed in the protected States.

As "Agent to the Governor-General in Rajputana,"

Lyall became the chief representative of the British Government in a vast tract of country containing about twenty Native States, some of them the most ancient and honoured of all Native States; for the Rajputs claim the bluest blood in India, and the traditions of Rajput chivalry are really noble. One Rajput chief, the Maharana of Oodeypore, can boast that even in the proudest days of the Moghul Empire no daughter of the house was ever given in marriage to a Mahomedan emperor; and his clan, the Sesodias of Oodeypore, have worthy rivals in the Rahtors of Jodhpore and others of equal fame. As a land of poetry and romance there is perhaps no part of India which can compare with Rajputana. And it is to be noted that the Rajput chiefships, the most ancient of Indian institutions, owe their continued existence to the British, who, after the break up of the Moghul Empire, saved them from being destroyed by the Maratha hordes.

The headquarters of the British representative in Rajputana were at Mount Abu, a beautiful "hill station" in the central part of India, some 4000 feet above the sea. Here he spent the summer, going down in the cold weather to march with his camp through the various States, and to visit the single British district of Ajmere, which formed an enclave among the chiefships. At that time there was no railway to Mount Abu, and it was an isolated place, to be reached only by a march of a hundred miles or so across a wild and barren country.

At Ajmere, encamped by the side of a lake, under the shadow of a picturesque fortress, Lyall spent the

Christmas of 1874. He found his new work very different from that of the Home Office—rougher and more personal, and in a sense less luxurious.

I haven't got half the regular grinding work I had, but, on the other hand, my secretariat office went like good clock-work. . . . As Secretary I used to feel a throb of pure pleasure on coming into a large, cool, quiet office-room, with mountains of papers scientifically piled by a first-rate head clerk on each side of an arm-chair. But it is plain that I wanted to be free from that pleasant office-room. My head won't stand continuous strains as it used. This morning I wrote a long article on Mill's Essays in order to oblige editorial friends, and I got up rather dazed. Nevertheless, I am clear that I would have made my living as a journalist in England, for I have got to like the craft. I may tell you by the way that I think Mill's Essays rather poor stuff, and there is nothing new in them.

As to his work, he was at first a little doubtful.

The whole of Rajputana, with slight exceptions, is held by the Rajputs; the chiefs are Rajput, and around them in each State is a powerful body of feudal lords, who hold their lands on pure military tenure, being bound only to furnish troopers. They are always fighting with their chief, and keep him in very strict order—they counterbalance the sovereign power exactly as the barons of Europe did, and very effectively prevent him from becoming an arbitrary despot. But under these proud Rajput nobles the people is reduced to something like serfdom; so that I, with my modern Radical ideas, feel rather out of sympathy with what is really the only free institution of India—the feudal system of Rajputana.

But as time went on, and Lyall saw more of the Rajput chiefships, the attraction of the great province grew upon him; and though his restless mind chafed at times against the dulness and solitude of Mount Abu,

he was on the whole happy enough. His experience of service in the Mutiny enabled him to understand and sympathise with the fighting traditions of the Rajput clans, and he often spoke of them with warm admiration.

In January 1875 Lyall writes to his mother—

I am marching still, my life is perpetual motion, and I can understand how people used to live years in moving camps in old days. Indeed many of the natives still get caught up in the crowd which follows me, and attach themselves permanently. They come with a petition to present, wait a long while, or do not get what they want, and travel along with others in like circumstance. Soon they get to like the company of a great camp, the roving life, and the ease with which they manage to get pickings in fuel and petty supplies out of the forage, which must always be provided along the line of march. So they wander all the cold weather after one, easing their conscience occasionally by a shout for redress as I ride by, and season after season they reappear. Especially the religious devotees, wandering ascetics, and suchlike, enjoy tacking themselves on to the camp, where they perform their simple mumbo-jumbo and are fed by the reverent camp-followers. You should have seen my tag-rag army cross the river Chumbul (about as broad as the Thames at Windsor) two days ago: crowds of horses, camels, and elephants on the banks, and great ferry-boats like those in the old pictures bringing over men armed in every way conceivable; the huge bastions of Kotah overhanging on one bank. Barring Oriental scenery and decorations, the whole feeling of this country is medieval; the Rajput *noblesse* caracoles along with sword and shield; the small people crowd round with rags and rusty arms; the king and his principal chiefs are lords of the country, and the peasant is at their mercy. Every class and rank has its place; and the upshot of all is that this state of society is not half as bad as it sounds, when the rajah is not

a fool or a brute. The chief nobles hunt, drink, and fight when they are not prevented; they eat the wild boar and get tipsy in their castles. I suppose they are not much worse than an average baron of Germany was;[1] but they are as different from the mild Hindoo of Bengal as you could imagine. I am afraid that we do not altogether improve the nobles by keeping them from fighting; for in the fights the best man came uppermost, whereas now the fools and cowards survive as well as the strong men.

Sir Henry and Sir George Lawrence both held this appointment, which is one of the finest political offices one could have, and I am much honoured by succeeding them. I am the first civilian who has ever held the appointment. . . . I fear I can neither match Sir Henry's earnest piety nor his other great qualities, but then these are easier times than his were.

A little later Lyall was exercised in mind by the trial of the Gaekwar of Baroda, a large State just beyond the border of Rajputana, who had attempted to poison the British Resident at his court. Not only was there a public inquiry, but the Government of India was imprudent enough to place native chiefs on the Commission, along with British officers, and to allow the appearance of counsel from England.

[1] It was one of Lyall's distinctive habits of mind that he was constantly trying to understand and express Indian conditions in terms of Europe. His literary work, whether prose or poetry, is full of instances. His Rajput rebels never "harried an English hall"; his Rahtor tribesmen are "wild unruly clans of camel-riding caterans"; his Rana of Oodeypore is "reduced to the condition of the last of the Merovingians." It is this as much as anything that makes his writings on Indian subjects more comprehensible and attractive to European readers than the generality of Indian books, which as a rule lack this illuminative touch, and are therefore uninviting. The 'Asiatic Studies,' where the religious thought of India is brought into contact with European speculation, are a good example of Lyall's method.

Lyall advocated treating the attempt as a political crime, and dethroning the Gaekwar by a *coup-d'état.* "I am not at all certain," he wrote, "that the trial will result in a clean verdict of guilty, and if the verdict is not unanimous it will have an awkward effect." The result showed the correctness of his judgment, for the native chiefs would not, probably could not, go against their order, and the inquiry ended in a divided verdict. In the end the Government had to disregard the verdict, and to depose the Gaekwar as an act of State. It was an unpleasant incident, and illustrated the danger of applying English ideas to Indian conditions.

From Baroda affairs he turns to English religious questions.

I trust the pother between Ritualist and R.C. has ceased by this time — to me, alas, the whole question has long ceased to be important, as between different phases of faith; but I feel a little savage against the Ritualists, who seem to me to be leading away the people to worship strange idols, and to abandon the spiritual faith which our fathers kept so pure of old; for the Miltonic faith was high and pure at any rate.

Lyall had to deal at times not only with the Rajputs but with the aboriginal jungle tribes. He writes to his mother from Mount Abu—

The wild people in the hills south-east turned out a few weeks ago and knocked down our boundary pillars. . . . The great object is to keep these wild creatures in order without hurting them; we don't want to fight poor people who use bows and arrows, but occasionally they turn savage and kill

people. They have never been subdued by any one; and their chiefs can turn out, some of them, thousands of bowmen, who swarm around like wild bees if you annoy them. Then we have just heard that a convoy of baggage and stores coming up to us from Ahmedabad has been plundered by "mounted marauders," which gives a pleasant tinge of adventure to our position in these jungles. But the marauders always keep clear of Britishers, though not of their goods.

I am leading a very quiet life up here, not much work, and less play; there is a billiard table to give me exercise; and I attempt whist a good deal, but can't play it very well.

At that time he certainly could not. Among his political officers, all military men, were some excellent whist players. None of them were his equals intellectually, but they used to tear their hair over his play. The fact was that though he liked playing he did not take the game seriously, and his thoughts would often wander to other things. But in later years he seems to have mended his ways, for an officer who served under him when he was Lieutenant-Governor writes: "He was a very fine player—the best in the province." He afterwards took keenly to bridge.

I hear hardly anything from other parts of India, but the ways of Rajputana amuse me. When the Raja demands too high taxes from a religious brotherhood, they solemnly bury one of the brethren alive, and imprecate the curse of his death on the king's head. Also they burnt an old woman alive, or tried to do it. The Raja sends to us and implores us to interfere, which we do, and then the holy men won't pay any taxes at all. Also there is a fight going on at a neighbouring castle, much in the medieval style; no one much hurt, but the siege goes on for weeks, and both parties telegraph

vehemently to the British Agent. I decline to interfere, and intimate that they had best fight it out, so long as they make an end quickly and don't disturb other States. They are an outlandish people; but they like their own life, though I am afraid it won't last long.

Time flies rapidly, and my own generation is taking the downhill road; we have passed the watershed of life. I see that Marillier, who was the first of my year at Eton College —I was second—has died at the Cape, aged 40.

I doubt whether I could bear another season up here, though in many ways the appointment is to my taste: not much to do, and picturesque surroundings, with a great deal of authority and very little law. The position makes one rather lazy and disinclined for real hard work.

The political service is, in fact, very lightly worked in comparison with other Indian services, though not as lightly as the English diplomatic service. Still he was not idle, for he was engaged on another article criticising the views of Max Müller, "but," he writes, "Müller took my last attack so kindly that I am ashamed to open fire again." Eventually he did so, much to the satisfaction of John Morley. He was greatly encouraged in this by seeing that Sir Henry Maine, for whose ability and literary style he had much admiration, had mentioned him in a lecture in complimentary terms. Such allusions, as he observed, did him much good in his official life, and they always pleased him.

I see that Maine entirely sees and assents to the object of my paper, which is to dissipate the extraordinarily false picture drawn of Indian religions by Max Müller and others who accept the literary as if it were the popular

account of Hinduism—for all the world as if a Hindu were to go to Leviticus for an account of the belief and worship of Kent, Müller goes to the Vedas for the creed and ideas of an Indian rustic or shopkeeper.

Before the Abu season was over Lyall was getting tired of his isolation, and wishing to be once more *en rapport* with the powers at headquarters. He writes to Mrs Holland—

I can always influence people by talking rather more than by writing; because my writing is a little too much pointed and coloured for official reports, and produces a sort of "insubordinate" effect on calm secretaries. You know the downright nervous style of my mother; well, my style keeps a hereditary tinge of that, whatever I may do to repress it. I am afraid I have just given the Government a dig in the ribs for overriding me unduly, as I consider, upon a subject in which they are all wrong. The consequence will be that the Government will give me a bang over the head, if it has any self-respect; but in public affairs I have deliberately adopted the rule of conduct which answers with plucky little boys at school. When you are hit unjustly, always hit back; you get a licking that time, but the big boy thinks twice before hitting again. The difficulty lies in discriminating between a merited and unmerited slap in the face.

What are your matured views about a boy's education? Do you think that Eton is worth the cost? I know that it gives a boy a certain tone and savour of high tastes, but on the other hand it wastes a lot of time in which a boy's mind might be much more effectively trained; because, after all, Eton is only playing at education; there is no serious attempt either to form or to instruct, unless matters and masters have much changed. . . . I myself only began to do anything at school at between 15 and 16 years. . . . Encourage versifying; it keeps open the emotions and also forms the prose style; you note that J. S. Mill places much value on it.

Lyall's want of enthusiasm for the Eton education is shown more than once in his letters, and it is curious, for he also expresses strong views about the utter ignorance of any high standard which is the result of education at a bad school. He may have underrated the value of the actual teaching at Eton. A few years later a well-known army tutor, consulted on the choice of a school for a boy, answered, "Send him to Eton. I have never had a boy from Eton who knew nothing, as I have had from many other schools. Eton boys are often idle, but they have all learnt something, because they are well taught." And, after all, the "certain tone and savour of high tastes"—the good effect on character and habits of thought—are of greater value than any small difference in the stock of book knowledge a boy can acquire. No one exemplified this better than Lyall himself. And he sent his sons to Eton.

His desire to get back to the centre of affairs was not to be immediately gratified, for in the beginning of October he received from Lord Northbrook a letter telling him that Sir Lewis Pelly,[1] for whom he was acting, was not to return to Rajputana for another year.

> The fewer changes we have in the high political appointments the better, and I fancy from what you said when I last saw you that another year in Rajputana will not be disagreeable to you.

Lyall took the announcement quietly, but he did not altogether like it.

[1] Colonel Sir Lewis Pelly, K.C.S.I., a well-known political officer.

I don't mind staying in Rajputana one year more [he wrote to his mother], but beyond that, to stay would be to return to the jungles whence Lord Northbrook plucked me forth nearly three years ago, and I won't do that. This place is pleasant and picturesque, but it is remote, with no society; the only real attraction is that it enables me to save a little money.

Meanwhile Lord Northbrook and his party were coming through the province on a cold-weather tour, to see something of the Native States, and Lyall explains to his mother what this means—

I have to arrange for their posting 200 or 300 miles across a country where there is no ordinary conveyance to be had, at the rate of 50 miles a-day, and to find them sumptuous board and lodging wherever they stop. Not at my own cost mind, except at Ajmere; but at an infinite expenditure of trouble. We shall, by the aid of the great chiefs, lay out above 100 pairs of horses; and we shall have escorts of cavalry along the whole route. Tents and dinners will be improvised in the wilderness, and roads made straight in the desert. All Rajputana produces its horses and dromedaries to help us along; and as no Viceroy has hitherto crossed these wilds, it is a new undertaking. Our sons and grandsons will look back with curiosity to the primitive times in which these things were done; when all the barbaric pomp and power of the English Governors shall have been thrown aside as medieval rubbish, and we go about in railways, and halt at bad hotels. At present the most enjoyable sight I have seen for long is a wild naked Bheel, with long hair streaming down his head, a bow and quiver in one hand, and a string of little bells (to keep off tigers) jangling in the other, bringing the post up the hillside in the moonlight.

On his way to meet Lord Northbrook, Lyall visited

Oodeypore, "the capital of the oldest State in India," a beautiful city of marble palaces overhanging a lake, amid wild rocky hills. Lyall must have enjoyed the beauty of it, but on his first arrival he was weary of travel.

I myself am writing under this eternal canvas of a tent, from which I seem destined never to escape. I have got long journeys and constant movement before me for another six months, with the usual cloudy horizon. I mean cloudy, because I can see no distance ahead. Camp life I detest, because it is an incessant state of motion, and I can do nothing unless my surroundings are to some degree stable; if my papers are swept off into boxes every evening for the next march I am unable to work.

Meanwhile a 'Fortnightly' article had been written on the "Origin of Divine Myths in India." It called forth an expression of warm approval from Herbert Spencer.

In the winter of 1875-76 occurred the visit of the Prince of Wales (King Edward VII.) to India, and Lyall writes on the subject to John Morley—

It was very curious to notice the extraordinary reverence with which the people regarded a king's son; the proudest chiefs of Rajputana were quite ready to bow down before him; and I perceived that this was a natural effect of the strong feelings of these chiefs towards royalty and, above all, high lineage. I am convinced that our influence in India is very much greater than we take it to be, and that the upper classes are tending to become Anglo-maniacs rather than haters of foreign rule. The masses and the religious orders don't like us, out of that instinctive hatred for the foreigner and the infidel which you can see always among

the same classes in Europe; but as to the rich men and the nobles, my fear is that the next generation will be seen squandering their revenues in the great hotels of Paris and London, and demoralising England rather than improving India by virtuous examples of the blessings of civilisation. They will think scorn of this dull hot land, and will give no heed to the advice of respectable officials.

Events have shown how much truth there was in the forecast.

In the spring of 1876 Lord Northbrook was succeeded by Lord Lytton, and Lyall was summoned to Allahabad to meet the new Viceroy, who was on his way to Calcutta. Lyall found that John Morley had "much and kindly recommended" Lord Lytton to make acquaintance with him. Fitzjames Stephen had done the same.

I do hope and trust with all my heart you will not let anything you hear prejudice you against Lyall. He is one of the finest fellows I ever knew in my whole life, and, if you cultivate him a little, you will find him a man of more knowledge, more imagination (in the lofty and eminently complimentary sense of the word), more intelligent interest in the wonders of India than almost any one in India. . . . It will be, as Byron says of Pope, a sin and a shame and a damnation if you and he don't come together. He *is* the one man (except Maine) I ever met who seemed to me to see the splendour of India, the things which have made me feel all that I have so often said to you about it.

Lyall was favourably impressed by Lord Lytton, and wrote to his mother that his reception had been most kind, but "I do not cease to regret Lord North-

brook." A few days later he received from the outgoing Viceroy the following letter—

April 14, 1876.

MY DEAR LYALL,—I have fully explained to Lord Lytton the arrangement I had contemplated if Aitchison[1] had been appointed to be Chief Commissioner of Mysore, namely, that you would have been appointed Foreign Secretary, and that it was with the object of giving you experience which might be useful to you in that office that you were appointed to act for Sir Lewis Pelly in Rajputana.

I hope some day to see you Foreign Secretary, as I think you are the best man for that post. At present, as you know, Mr Saunders goes to Mysore, which has upset all these arrangements.—Yours very truly,

NORTHBROOK.

And soon afterwards Lord Lytton wrote "a very gracious note" to the same effect. Lyall received these letters with mixed feelings. He was inclined to resent, a little unreasonably perhaps, being "shunted down to Rajputana" on a promise which had not been fulfilled; but "secretly," he writes,

I feel lazy, and should be much dismayed if I were suddenly summoned to Simla. The worst is that I am getting too old for the Secretariat; not that it is not held by men much older often, but I have a feeling that in a year or so my full vigour of work will have declined, and that I shall not shove the coach along as I would have done about 1875. . . . At present I am very comfortable here, and only want to be left quiet until the end of August, when I will start for England.

[1] Foreign Secretary, afterwards Sir Charles Aitchison, K.C.S.I., Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab.

It is rather amusing to find a man writing in this way at forty-one; but no doubt climate tells, and in India a civil servant is ordinarily superannuated at fifty-five.

In the same letter he writes to his mother—

> I have wellnigh given up verse-writing, what I do write does not satisfy me, and I destroy it, there is a poverty of production about my brain; I have lots of ideas, but putting them into good words is a great labour.

Nevertheless he had written at this time his first article for 'The Edinburgh Review.' It dealt with Rajputana, and gave an interesting picture of the country; but it would not apparently have been accepted by the editor had not Sir Henry Maine decidedly advised him to publish it. Lyall was to write many more articles for the 'Edinburgh' in later years, but for the time he preferred the 'Fortnightly.'

He was now looking forward with pleasure, mixed with some apprehension, to getting away in August for six months' leave to England. It meant seeing his children, and his mother and sisters; but it meant also a march of a hundred and fifty miles to the nearest railway station in the middle of the rainy season, when the rivers were often in flood and impassable. Arrived in England, he would have to set up a house, with a complete set of new servants, at heavy expense, after the manner of the Indian exile without a home in his own country,—who often finds the small savings of years sunk in a few months of discomfort and disappointment, and goes back at

the end of it, with heavy heart and empty purse, to face another long period of separation. For Lyall at that moment the prospect was further clouded by the sudden fall in the value of silver, the rupee having gone down from two shillings to one and sixpence, "so that," as he wrote, "to get your money home you have to throw one quarter of it into the sea."

At that time he had practically saved nothing, and the fear of a narrow old age, with no provision made for his children, was beginning to weigh upon him. Nor was it pleasant to feel that he had not the least idea where he would have to go on his return to India. Rajputana might not be vacant; and he might have to take up some post a thousand miles away, which necessitated packing up, before he left India, everything he had in the world.

No one who has not tried it knows how much trouble, and what a heavy loss, these incidents of Indian service entail; and it was, perhaps, not wonderful that Lyall should have felt some shrinking from another break up.

Not long before he left he was in correspondence with Rivett-Carnac about his poem, "The Old Pindaree," which Rivett-Carnac wished to republish in 'Notes and Queries.'

It was characteristic of Lyall that he had never kept a copy of the poem.

"The Old Pindaree" [he writes] looked rather rough doggrel in that newspaper cutting you sent, and the verses full of Indian words that sound barbarous to English ears, so I have corrected the whole piece, and send you the latest

edition, than which none other is now genuine. But, speaking sincerely, I don't think it worth sending home. 'N. and Q.' wouldn't understand it.

Certainly no one could accuse Lyall of setting too high a value upon his own verses.

About the middle of August, in spite of all his doubts and apprehensions, Lyall and his wife left Mount Abu for England, where shortly after their arrival a second son was born to him. I cannot find that anything else of special interest occurred to him during this period of furlough. He saw his children and others whom he wished to see. He wrote an article on the "Formation of Indian Clans and Castes," which appeared in the 'Fortnightly' for January 1877. And apparently he did a little shooting, for in a letter to one of his sisters, which seems to be of this period, he writes—

I don't exactly enjoy the shooting, but had as lieve do it as anything else, if I must visit my friends—I would not, though, trouble myself to kill a pheasant in ten years if no one invited me to do so.

Meanwhile he had, by his absence in England, missed the great Durbar at Delhi, when Lord Lytton proclaimed the assumption of the Imperial title by the Queen. But Lyall really disliked such ceremonials, at which he was rather out of his element.

Early in February 1877 he was in Paris again, on his way back to India, and he writes to his mother—

I feel very much your great affection for me; while I am haunted by the faces of my two little girls, which faces, as

such, are gone for ever, since they will be quite changed by the time I return. . . . One gets softer in some ways as the years multiply.

And in a similar tone he writes to Mrs Holland—

I have been a good deal touched at the leave-takings this time. . . . It seems very hard that I should have to leave the children, when every one else lives in his own home as a matter of course. . . . Then my mother and sisters are more to me every time I come home. However, I know most of this tenderness will harden down as soon as I plunge again into Indian work.

Happily all feel this in a measure. The lot of an exile would be unendurable if it were not so. But even in the press of work there come times of retrospect and longing which are not easy to bear, and they came to Lyall as to others.

Meanwhile Sir Lewis Pelly was being employed by Lord Lytton on special duty, and Lyall was in some doubt during his voyage whether he should return to the Home Office, which was still his substantive post, or to Rajputana; but eventually he decided for Rajputana, on the grounds of economy and leisure, and early in April he was settled again in his quiet home at Mount Abu.

I am sliding back into the old-world feeling of simple notions and remote monotony which is always produced by existence in this corner. I cannot make out how it is; but since I returned from England all restlessness and ambition have gone out of me, and I feel quite content to live in these jungles.

Lyall deceived himself. The restlessness and ambition were still there. It was at this time that I began really to know him. The Indian Foreign Office, in which I had been serving as an attaché, had sent me to act as his "First Assistant," or secretary in charge of his office. There were four of us, one of whom is now Colonel Yate, the Unionist member for the Melton division of Leicestershire,—then a lieutenant in the Staff Corps, and a noted hunter of big game. We were all young, and more fond of sport than of the pursuits in which Lyall took pleasure, so we were no companions for him. He was sorry for the slaughtered beasts which we used to bring back in triumph, and inclined to look upon us as young barbarians. But he was courteous and kindly, and in spite of the difference in age and position I soon came to feel real pleasure in his society. I have a vivid recollection, though thirty-five years have passed since then, of the work I used to take up to him, and of long walks over the wooded hillsides which surrounded our beautiful lake. Before long he began to show me his verses, and to talk over all sorts of matters; and I gained some insight into the working of his mind. In certain ways he was reserved; and one felt that he would have resented any undue familiarity. But there was "an indescribable charm" about him; and certainly he never let me see any sign of the suspicious temperament which was often attributed to him. On the contrary, after the first few weeks he treated me with the most generous confidence. In that way he was like the man whose life he afterwards wrote, Lord

Dufferin. The two had another feature in common, that they backed their subordinates with unswerving loyalty against any attack.

No one who had to work with Lyall could fail to admire the keenness of his intellect; but there was much more than this to admire in him.

I have written of him elsewhere—

> To me, seeing him day after day, and watching his dealings with those around him, nothing seemed more honourable than his quick and warm sympathy for the chiefs and people of India. There was no "gush" about it, no weak and ignorant sentimentalism, but the broad-minded comprehension and respect of a fine and chivalrous spirit. His consistent teaching to us younger men was not to be hasty or hard, above all never to be contemptuous, but to recognise and admire all that was admirable even in those who opposed us. His unfailing sense of humour helped him here. More than once, though he was quick-tempered, I have known him pull himself up and laugh, quietly, but with keen enjoyment, at the success of some little manœuvre, some bit of diplomatic sword-play, which would have made many men seriously angry. He always saw the amusing side of it, even if a man had got under his guard and touched him.

The war between Russia and Turkey was then going on, and almost every one in India was strongly on the side of the Turks. Englishmen and Indians alike seemed practically unanimous on that point. I can well remember the interest with which the war telegrams used to be received. We had at Mount Abu "Vakils," or representatives of the Native States, under Lyall's charge. These people used to come to me constantly to study a map on which I marked the

progress of the opposing forces; and though they were almost all Hindus, their sympathy with the Turks was unmistakable. Lyall, with his experiences of the Mutiny and his wide range of thought, was decidedly for the Russians; and it was then that he first began to expound to me the doctrine that our proper policy in Asia was to come to an understanding with them. He fully recognised the fact that a sweeping Russian success in Asia Minor might "overset the balance of all Asia, and may threaten our communications with India in more ways than one," but he wished them such success as would break down the power of Turkey in Europe.

With regard to less important matters he writes—

> There is some tiger-shooting going on. I never go against tigers on foot, being convinced that the risk is not worth while; but the young officers do, and one had the narrowest escape here two days ago. In another part of Rajputana an officer has just been killed by a tiger; the news came as a sharp commentary on the text I had just been preaching from to my assistants. I myself have a queer secret sympathy for the tiger when alone with his claws only he defeats men armed with powerful rifles.

The officer who had the narrow escape was Yate. A tiger, headed by a shot from another of the party, broke back and went at a gallop along a narrow jungle track leading over a flat rock, on which Yate was standing. From the opposite side of the ravine I could see the yellow coat flashing through the bushes at intervals. Yate, a cool, good shot, killed it within ten feet of him with a bullet through the head.

Maurice Le Breton, who had fired at it first, was a brother of Mrs Langtry the actress. He was mortally wounded by a tiger not long afterwards. Lyall was right, no doubt; the game was not worth the candle; but he would not have thought so fifteen years earlier.

On his way out he had written some verses, probably those which are to be found in his published volume under the title "A Night in the Red Sea." He sent them to his sister Barbara from Mount Abu.

You will observe that they do not fulfil the conditions of poetry. . . . What a difficult art is that of style! Given a certain set of words and phrases, 999 persons out of 1000 can never arrange them so as to produce the effect of poetic form; the 1000th does it at once, like Shelley or Milton, and every one sees it when it's done. Swinburne, again, with all his faults, has the gift; you may try as you like, you can never make the same music or power come out of your setting of words as come from his. On the whole, I begin to think that Keats's lines, "As when, upon a tranced summer night," in "Hyperion," are nigh to the best in modern English poetry for pure style.

At this time he was carefully studying the works of Fitzjames and Leslie Stephen, of which he thought highly.

But the more I study the more I am oppressed with the belief that everything worth saying on morals and religion has been said already; and I have reasoned myself into the fixed conviction that nothing can be actually discovered as to whence we come or whither we go, so that I am falling into a rather aimless condition of mind.

He was, as usual, getting restless, and tired of Abu. He knew little of what was going on at Headquarters,

which worried him, but from what little he did know he was inclined to think that an active policy in Afghan affairs was a mistake.

> People try to scare us with fear of Russia beyond our N.-W. Frontier, as to which I am utterly incredulous, and I almost wish they would come, being sick of the policy of intriguing with such wretched barbarians as the Afghans.
>
> I am grieved at the Turkish triumphs, . . . and I think a revival of military Islam bodes no good to us out here, where the Muslim must ever be our enemies and rivals.

He was to see his wish fulfilled sooner than he expected, and to be plunged deep into the whirlpool of Afghan affairs, but this was not yet.

In August he was beginning to get anxious about a different matter, the failure of the summer rains. A large part of Rajputana consists of vast sandy tracts where heavy rain is not usual, or much needed; but that year the drought had been extraordinary, and there were fears of famine. I remember sitting with him on the hillside, looking out westward over the plains of Jodhpore, and watching morning after morning the clouds roll past our feet from the south, like lines of great battalions; but by midday the sun seemed to have devoured them all, and the sky was clear. Eventually, after six rainless weeks, Lyall thought it necessary to leave Mount Abu and go down to the threatened districts. He left most of us in Abu, and we revelled in the shooting which he deprecated; for, the country around us having dried up, the game came to the Abu hill, where the lake, though low, had still a plentiful

supply of water; and going out for a walk or ride in the early mornings we used to find fresh tracks in the dusty roads of the little station itself. Lyall did not return that season, for soon afterwards he was summoned to Simla to discuss the prospects of famine and some important Salt Treaties which were to be negotiated with the Native States. He had left Simla in November 1873, expecting to return in a few months, and had not seen the place again for four years. That is the way in India. He looked "rather sadly" at the house where he had spent his one Simla season; but apparently Lord Lytton did not want him in the Secretariat, and he writes—

I think I shall settle down in Rajputana and cultivate the primitive races, trying also to save a little cash, if this be possible. . . . This is a very pleasant, gay, easy-living place among the pinewoods in the mountains, fifty miles from the plains. The people who live here regularly can think very little of the far-off deserts about Jodhpore whence I have come, where the cattle are dying for want of forage, and they are praying to all their gods for a little rain, where you may see thin, gaunt, hard-looking men come riding in across the sands on camels, with their matchlocks and water-skins slung beside them.

One of his sisters had sent to 'The Cornhill Magazine' about this time some verses of his, the "Meditations of a Hindu Prince and Sceptic," and he writes to his mother: "I don't think much of my verses that the 'Cornhill' has taken, and had rather not have published; but it didn't matter a farthing." At the same time he wrote specially requesting that the "Sequel," or any other verses of

his, might not be sent to any magazine or publication. The "Sequel" was the piece which appears in his volume of verse as "A Quest in Vain." In his private collection of 'Verses Written in India,' it appears as a "Sequel to My Queen."

Before the close of the year Lyall returned to Rajputana, having in the meantime received near his border at Agra, in a house lent by a native chief, a four days' visit from the Viceroy. Lord Lytton was, he said, "very civil and nice."

His next duty was at the capital of the Ulwur State, where the Chief had just attained his majority. As representative of the British Government, Lyall had to seat the new Maharajah on his "gadi," amid a great assemblage of Englishmen and Indians, the ceremony being followed by two or three days of festivities. It was a fine show, and the young Chief, a handsome manly Rajput, bore himself bravely. He had, alas! a sad life and end. Practically this was Lyall's last piece of work in Rajputana.

In January 1878 he writes to his sister Barbara that he is sending her, not for publication, "some verses inspired by my visit to Jodhpore last year." These were the "Rajput Chief of the Old School." Jodhpore, with its wonderful castle in the desert, the stronghold of the fighting Rahtors, is just the place to inspire such a poem, a spirited and touching piece, full of sympathetic understanding. He goes on: "I am quite puzzled by the success of the 'Hindu Sceptic,' and I have never been properly satisfied with any verses but 'Theology in Extremis'."

As a matter of fact, the "Rajput Chief" was published in October of the same year by the 'Fortnightly.' This was an exceptional compliment, for the then editor, Morley, was not much given to publishing verses. He had published earlier in the year an article by Lyall on "Religious Beliefs and Morality."

A few days after the verses were sent home, Lyall was at last offered the Foreign Secretaryship, and his connection with Rajputana, as also with anything which could be described as the jungles, came to an end. The last four years had been of much value to him. They had greatly increased his knowledge of Native States and ruling Chiefs, with all of whom the Foreign Secretary has to deal; and they had given him a thorough rest before he entered upon the period of hard work which was before him. They had also given him leisure for thinking and writing, whereby his reputation, not only in India but in English literary circles, had gained considerably. Though he had sometimes repined at the dulness and isolation of Mount Abu, he had in reality much reason for feeling grateful to that beautiful and peaceful hill-top; and in later years he came to look back with pleasure and regret to the time he had spent there.

CHAPTER XI.

THE INDIAN FOREIGN OFFICE AND THE AFGHAN WAR. 1878–1881.

Work of the Indian Foreign Office—State of affairs when Lyall took charge—Lord Lytton's policy in Afghanistan—The Lawrence policy—Relations between Lyall and Lord Lytton—Colonel Colley—Death of Lyall's mother—Failure of attempt to improve relations with Afghanistan—Russian Mission in Kabul—War with Afghanistan, November 1878—Death of Amir—Treaty of Gandamak, May 1879—Sandeman and the Frontier tribes—Schools of Frontier policy—Massacre of Kabul Mission, September 1879—Advance of General Roberts on Kabul—Lyall's consideration for political officers—His dislike of annexing territory—Visit to Kabul—Resignation of Lord Lytton, April 1880—Lord Ripon succeeds—Defeat at Maiwand—Lord Roberts marches to Kandahar—Lyall's anxiety and relief—He visits Kandahar—Made a K.C.B.—Results of the war—Lyall leaves the Foreign Office.

In April 1878 Lyall took over charge of his new post. The work of the Indian Foreign Office at that time fell into three main divisions.

There was, first, the foreign work proper—that is, the control of the relations between the Indian Government and countries outside India. These relations were, of course, carried on with due regard to the general policy of the Empire; and the English Foreign Office had its diplomatic representatives in China, Persia, and other Asiatic countries. India, therefore, in a sense, had no Foreign policy of its own. Nevertheless there was a large amount of work connected with such countries, for India had long been in close touch with them, and the Indian Government had its Residents, or Political Agents,

in Turkish Arabia, in Persia, in Zanzibar, in Muscat, in Burma, and at times in other places. It was, moreover, in direct charge of our relations with Afghanistan and Beluchistan, and had to watch the state of affairs all over Central Asia, where the advance of Russia had for generations disquieted the minds of English statesmen.

Secondly, the Indian Foreign Office controlled our relations with the Native States in India, which covered more than a third of the Peninsula, and contained a population of sixty or seventy millions. Some of these States had in earlier days been independent powers, and formidable rivals to the British Government.

To carry on these various relations with States inside and outside India, the Indian Foreign Office had under its orders, as before explained, a considerable diplomatic or "political" service; and attached to that service were several local corps of infantry and cavalry.

Thirdly, the Indian Foreign Secretary managed the great State ceremonials, durbars, investitures, and the like; and was in charge of all arrangements connected with the Indian orders of knighthood, and the numerous honours and distinctions, other than military distinctions, conferred upon natives of India.

Besides these three main branches of work, the Indian Foreign Office had to deal with the Consular representatives of Foreign States, some of whom held diplomatic rank, though their recognised duties were concerned with commerce. It had also to supervise the internal administration of certain British districts,

and of States whose chiefs were minors or incapable of managing their affairs, and of tracts leased or otherwise transferred by Native Chiefs, but not annexed or brought under the law of British India. Also the Indian Foreign Office had charge of the operations for the suppression of organised murder and gang robbery, "Thagi and Dacoiti," and generally of the system of secret police throughout India.

These were wide functions, and it is not surprising that the Indian Chiefs, and Indians generally, regarded the Foreign Secretary as holding an important post. He was generally known as the "Sekutter Azim," or Chief Secretary; and it may be added that among Englishmen too the appointment was regarded as the blue ribbon of the Civil Service. It had been held by many of the most distinguished men in India, and was a certain passport to the Council or the Lieutenant-Governorship of a Province, if the Foreign Secretary did not prefer to remain where he was.

It is true, as already explained, that the Indian Secretaryships were not offices of such independence as those of Secretaries of State in England. The Secretaries were not members of the "Government of India"; and most of them had in a sense a departmental superior.

But in this respect the position of the Foreign Secretary was exceptional, for the custom had been that the Viceroy reserved to himself the special supervision of foreign affairs. No doubt a Foreign Office question of serious importance was ordinarily discussed in Council, either verbally at a Council meeting, or in written minutes, or both. Still, except

in rare cases, if the Viceroy and his Foreign Secretary were agreed upon the course to be followed, their view was not likely to meet with strong opposition in Council, the members of which were interested rather in military or administrative work than in the affairs of Native States or other Foreign Office business. And as a Viceroy, who had many other things to do, could not be expected to deal personally with more than a certain proportion of the questions arising in the Foreign Office, the responsibility of the Foreign Secretary was not small.

When Lyall assumed charge of the Foreign Office the post was one of special importance, for during the two years which had elapsed since Lord Lytton's appointment as Viceroy the aspect of foreign affairs had become very threatening. Lord Lytton had come out to India in 1876, with instructions to take decided measures for counteracting the dangers of the Russian advance in Central Asia, and in particular for re-establishing our influence in Afghanistan. It was asserted, and with truth, that for some time past our relations with that country had gradually changed for the worse, until the Amir Sher Ali, who had been friendly, was now almost hostile. The conclusion—a natural conclusion enough, though much could be said on the other side—was that the policy pursued of late, Lord Lawrence's policy of "Masterly Inactivity," had been mistaken, and that it must be abandoned. Lord Lytton was strongly of this opinion; and he had at his elbow, in the person of his Military Secretary, Colonel Colley,[1] a man who not only shared his views

[1] Afterwards Major-General Sir George Colley, killed at Majuba.

but was remarkably bold and confident in advocating a complete change of front. Accordingly the Amir was invited to enter into closer relations with the Indian Government, and some pressure was put upon him to receive a British Mission. But the result was to provoke suspicion and resentment on his part rather than to bring about a more friendly feeling; he declined to receive a mission; and in the end he practically broke off all relations with Lord Lytton's Government and turned to Russia for support. Meanwhile there had been war between Russia and Turkey, and the intervention of Great Britain in favour of the Turks had aroused the most passionate resentment among the victorious Russians. Checked by us in Europe, when Constantinople seemed to be in their grasp, they resolved to deliver a counter-stroke in Asia, and it became evident that before long we should have trouble upon our Indian frontier. Such was the state of affairs in the early part of 1878. To make matters worse, the foolishly-provocative attitude of the King of Burma had very nearly brought about an outbreak of hostilities in that quarter.

Both to East and West, therefore, the sky was lowering, and there was every indication that India was about to go through a time of trouble. Lyall's new post did not seem likely to be an easy one.

It may be added that Lord Lytton had shown no great alacrity in appointing him to the charge of that post. Though attracted by Lyall's literary tastes

and culture, the new Viceroy had not, at first, wished to bring him to the Foreign Office. This was comprehensible, for Lord Lytton knew that Lyall's views were in some respects opposed to his own. Lyall was a convinced Liberal in politics, and his friends in England were on that side. Lord Lytton was not altogether easy about his correspondence with them. Moreover, Lyall had been inclined to think that the formal assumption of the Imperial title by the Queen, in the manner proposed, would not be palatable to some of the native chiefs; and, later, it had been reported to Lord Lytton that he had criticised some of the features of the Imperial Assemblage of 1877, which was not improbable. The Assemblage had, on the whole, been a dignified and impressive ceremonial; but as regards some of the details connected with it, the distance between the sublime and the ridiculous had not always been maintained, and this had not escaped Lyall's sense of humour. But though Lord Lytton did not particularly want Lyall as Foreign Secretary, he did not approve of the man who then held the post, Charles Aitchison. It was an open secret that Aitchison, a pupil and admirer of Lord Lawrence, was not in accord with the new policy. A man of the highest character, upright and unselfish to a rare degree, he had loyally carried out the orders of the Government; but with all his loyalty he was a man of decided views, and he had thought it his duty to state them with uncompromising plainness. It was perhaps only natural that Lord Lytton should wish for a change; and after trying another Punjab

civilian, Thornton,[1] who proved to be no more acceptable to him, he made up his mind to appoint Lyall.

The appointment was well received by the press and the Indian public, and Lyall had to answer innumerable congratulations. Amongst others, Lord Roberts, then Quartermaster-General in India, wrote to him: "I am so delighted to hear that you are to succeed Aitchison; I have long wished to see you Foreign Secretary, . . . you are the right man in the right place, I am sure." This represented the general feeling, and Lyall was much pleased to know that it was so.

That Lord Lytton was not altogether easy about Lyall's correspondence with friends in England is not surmise; for in his letter offering Lyall the Foreign Secretaryship, he stipulated, courteously but clearly, that if Lyall accepted the appointment he must not discuss foreign affairs with his private friends in England; or, at all events, must not write against the new policy. The letter itself is not among Lyall's papers; but this was apparently the tenour of it. The stipulation, though natural enough, was perhaps hardly necessary, and Lyall was inclined to be impatient at the doubt implied; but Lord Lytton's tone, he said, was really kind, and he replied "with becoming humility." And certainly, after his acceptance, Lord Lytton went out of his way to assure his new Secretary of his entire con-

[1] T. H. Thornton, C.S.I., D.C.L., well known for his good service in the Mutiny.

fidence and goodwill. I extract from a batch of his letters, — picturesque letters many of them, with very thick paper and magnificent monograms, and beautiful handwriting, and equally beautiful style,— one of the earliest, in which he explains his views as to the nature of their future relations. Lyall had written to him on the subject, and he writes in reply—

It is quite essential that in the eyes of our native subjects, feudatories and allies, the prestige and authority of the Foreign Secretary should be upheld. But the Government of India is still so necessarily a personal Government that it seems to me as undesirable to reduce the Viceroy to an official machine as to reduce the Foreign Secretary to a cipher. I think we were quite *d'accord* that there is a *juste milieu* between the two extremes. And, indeed, I may say that one of the many reasons why I have long wished to see you in your present post is that the Foreign Department seems to me the one of all others in which most depends upon the personality of the Chief Secretary. He is more than any other Government Secretary, and in some respects even more than the Viceroy himself, the visible embodiment of the Government in its relations with native India; and to the affairs with which he is constantly dealing, the saying that "C'est le ton qui fait la chanson" seems specially applicable. Don't you think so? Your letter reminds me that perhaps I have never sufficiently explained to you the light in which I regard our official relations. I wish them to be thoroughly and unreservedly confidential. You may rely upon it that I will never consciously or willingly conceal from you anything I know, think, wish, or have done in connection not only with the affairs of your own Department, but also those of any other Department which you may be interested to know about at any time.

These were frank and generous words, and Lord Lytton steadily acted up to them during the remainder of his stay in India, the result being that Lyall and he were throughout on the most friendly and satisfactory terms. It is true that in conversation Lord Lytton was at times inclined to criticise Lyall as not sufficiently decided in his views, and to complain that he saw all round the questions which came before him rather than through them,—that he would show every conceivable objection to every course proposed, but would not plainly advocate any other. The fact was that the two men were very dissimilar in temperament: the one clever and bold in his views, but impulsive, and apt at times to do rash things; the other equally clever, but by nature cautious and reflective, with "the Lyall habit of seeing both sides of a question," and with the extra incentive to caution supplied by experience and knowledge of India.

Viceroys and Governors fresh from England, much better acquainted with European affairs and English conditions than the men they find in India, are naturally inclined to look upon Indian officers from a rather lofty point of view, and to be impatient of claims to local knowledge, the value of which they are, for a time at least, necessarily unable to appreciate. A bold and confident spirit like Colley, who scoffed at local knowledge, was more attractive to Lord Lytton; but it may be doubted whether that brave soldier, with all his capacity and dash, was as good an adviser for a Viceroy of Lord Lytton's temperament as the

man who made him see all the possible consequences of what he wished to do, and discouraged anything like hasty action.

On his side Lyall liked and admired Lord Lytton,—admired his cleverness, and his courage, and his good looks. I remember Lyall being really annoyed one day as we were walking down to his house, "Innes's Own," because I would not agree in his view that Lord Lytton was the handsomest man in Simla. Afterwards, when I had seen more of Lord Lytton, I got to recognise his courage, and the touch of genius in him; but at first he struck me as too picturesque in looks and dress, and as contrasting unfavourably with some of our soldiers. When I said so, Lyall answered me more impatiently than he had ever done before. But, with all his sincere liking and admiration, Lyall thought Lord Lytton too fond of scenic display, and too hasty in his decisions. Also he felt that the Viceroy, conscious of his own literary powers, was inclined to like writing for its own sake, and to be carried away by his artistic enjoyment of style. Nevertheless, in the main, the two got on very well together. I had by that time returned to the Foreign Office as Assistant Secretary, and again saw much of Lyall, both officially and privately; and I had therefore good reason to know that, in spite of some differences of temperament and view, Lyall worked not only loyally—he would always have done that—but cordially with his new Chief. The love of literature was always a bond between them, and gave a pleasant

tone to their official relations. Their correspondence is interesting and characteristic. One letter of Lord Lytton's, for example, begins with something about a telegram from Afghanistan, then goes on with two pages of quotation, written in his own fine hand, from Dante's "Purgatorio," and winds up with a few words more on official matters. Nor is this an exceptional instance. His letters to Lyall were rarely the letters of an official superior pure and simple.

Early in 1878, soon after he had taken up his new work, Lyall received the news of his mother's death. He felt her loss very deeply, and his letters on the subject are touching to read. "She was the incarnation of pure unselfish love," he said, and the words are enough.

Meanwhile the cloud beyond the North-West Frontier was darkening fast. Russia and England were at that moment in a condition of dangerous antagonism, and the prospect of war was freely discussed. Lyall, always inclined to advocate an understanding with Russia, earnestly hoped that war might be averted, for though he thought we should get the best of it, he disliked the quarrel. Moreover, he felt that by our incessant writing and talking about the Russian advance, we had imbued the natives of India with the belief that we were afraid of Russia; and he knew the danger of such a belief in case anything should go wrong at first. This attitude of perpetual apprehension had in fact done much harm in India. It was the less excusable because until that time, and for some years afterwards,

we were undoubtedly stronger than the Russians for war in Asia.

As every one knows, war with Russia did not take place; but what came upon us was almost as serious a matter. At the end of July 1878 India was startled by the news that a Russian mission had been received in Kabul, and a wave of excitement went through the country. In truth, the position was one which no Indian Government could regard without grave concern; for the diplomatic occupation of Kabul by the Russians, coupled with our exclusion, meant a very discreditable if not dangerous state of affairs. It was therefore decided to send a "friendly" mission to the Amir, under the charge of a distinguished officer, Sir Neville Chamberlain, who was to insist upon going to Kabul unless forcibly prevented. This was a step the wisdom of which was much debated at the time, for it was evident that the result might be an open rupture with the Afghans. But it is not easy to see what else, in the circumstances, Lord Lytton could have done. The affront inflicted upon us was one in which he could hardly have acquiesced. The mission accordingly went forward, but was repelled by show of arms, and a plain threat of force, on the part of the Amir's representative.

This was a stormy beginning for Lyall's term as Foreign Secretary. He had taken charge only in April, and by September a rupture with Afghanistan was practically inevitable. But he entirely agreed with Lord Lytton. "I quite believe we have been

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right," he wrote; "I think we had no alternative but to do what we have done." As to the Amir, "we must now bring him to terms; but we shall do as little as possible."

These words are taken from a letter to his sister, Mrs Holland.

Lyall had now entirely ceased writing on such subjects to friends in England outside his own family —for example, to the late Viceroy, Lord Northbrook, who with his usual straightforwardness had recognised at once, of his own accord, that on Lyall's part such correspondence would no longer be proper. Even to his own people Lyall wrote very little indeed. But to make clear the views held by him during the course of our Afghan troubles it is desirable to show that, so far, he had been decidedly in favour of the action taken.

Then followed several weeks of negotiation; after which, finding that the Amir was not open to any other argument, the Government of India demanded an apology, and backed the demand with an ultimatum. The apology was not sent, and war was declared.

By that time Lyall was beginning to feel the strain of his work and responsibility. He doubted whether he had "the head for rapid and precise working under pressure. I get irritated and tired." But he had no doubt that the course taken was the proper one.

It is curious to observe how minds, equal in apparent clearness and knowledge, differ entirely upon political questions—Lord Lytton and Fitzjames Stephen certain that views are

right, which Lord Northbrook and Grant Duff denounce to me as utterly wrong. I go with the two former, after attentive survey of the situation. We let loose our troops on the Amir before he expected us; we gave him to the 20th[1] to apologise, and on the 20th evening, the Viceroy, the Commander-in-Chief, the Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab, Sir N. Chamberlain, and I sat round a table awaiting a telegram from Peshawar to say whether a reply had come across the border by sunset. It had not come, and the word went forth.

The campaign which ensued was short and decisive. Our troops advanced in three columns, striking heavy blows. In the Khyber Pass the northern column, under General "Sam" Browne, took the great key fort of Ali Masjid, and opened the Pass, which led direct to the Amir's capital at Kabul. In the centre Sir Frederick Roberts stormed the Peiwar Kotul and opened an alternative route by the Logar valley. In the south, a few weeks later, Sir Donald Stewart occupied Kandahar.

The regular army which the Amir, forgetting the lessons of history, had laboriously created, fell to pieces in his hands. Hopeless of holding Kabul, he fled northwards to appeal to the Russians, who advised him to make his peace with the English. In February 1879 he died, "betrayed, heart-broken, 'twixt infidel friend and foe." His punishment had been swift, and the attempt of the Russians to embarrass us by a mission to Kabul had ended in discomfiture. Their own serious difficulties with the Turkomans of Geok Tepe, which were to end not much later in a severe repulse, added to the effect

[1] November 1878.

of the British victories. Our star brightened in the sight of all Asia, and the triumph of Lord Lytton's policy seemed complete.

Still there was much to do before the position could be regarded as secure. Our armed forces had indeed prevailed, but we had no quarrel with the people of Afghanistan, and no wish to occupy their country. Our quarrel, according to Lord Lytton's proclamation of war, had been solely with the Amir Sher Ali. Now that Sher Ali was gone, our business was to come to terms with his successor, to bring the war to an end, and to make such arrangements as would establish our future relations with Afghanistan upon a satisfactory footing. Unfortunately, it is always hard to persuade the people of a country that you wish them well if you make war on their ruler and invade their territory.

Sher Ali's successor was his son, Yakub Khan, a man of pleasant manners, who in his youth had gained some reputation among the Afghans for courage and capacity. But his spirit had been broken by years of confinement; and though almost immediately after his accession to the throne he showed that he had no desire to continue hostilities, it was not an easy matter to bring him to the point, or to ascertain whether he had sufficient power in his own country to carry his people with him. Eventually, in May 1879, news was received that the Amir had himself come into the British camp; and there followed some weeks of negotiation between the Afghans and the officer whom Lord

Lytton had picked out as his representative, Louis Cavagnari. The upshot was that before the end of the month the war was ended by the Treaty of Gandamak. Under the provisions of that treaty we seemed to have gained all that Lord Lytton had desired, and played so boldly to obtain. The Amir consented to receive a British Resident at Kabul, and to abstain for the future from any political relations with foreign powers; Kandahar was to be held by us for a time until the Amir should be firmly established; and the Amir handed over to us certain districts, south of Kandahar, which we considered necessary for the rectification and strengthening of our frontier on that side. It seemed as if our influence in Afghanistan had been fully established, to the exclusion of all others, and that the policy of activity in Central Asia had proved itself completely superior to the policy of the Lawrence school.

It should be observed before going farther that the old policy had to some extent been infringed before Lord Lytton arrived in India; for Lord Northbrook, cautious as he was, and opposed to all rash advance, had allowed Major Sandeman, a frontier officer who had a real genius for dealing with wild tribes, to march across our border into Beluchistan, and come to an understanding with the chiefs of that country. Lord Lytton, on first arrival, had been inclined to resent this step, and had thought of recalling Sandeman, for he was contemplating other measures. Eventually, however, he allowed the enterprise to go on. Sandeman, a Scotchman of extraordinary courage and

pertinacity, soon brought the chiefs of Beluchistan under his influence, and established himself as a power in the country. The result was the occupation of Quetta, and the advance of our strategic frontier to the line of the Khojak Amran mountains. It was to secure that point—a great bastion, as it were, thrown out beyond the line of the Indus—that the Afghans were now made to withdraw from the neighbouring districts of Peshin and Sibi, to which I have referred above. Lord Northbrook was in no way responsible for the military occupation of Quetta; but he was responsible for the first step of a new policy, that of bringing the frontier tribes under our influence instead of leaving them alone.

As this question of the frontier tribes crops up more than once in later pages of this memoir, it may be desirable to explain here what the question is, or was at the time when Lyall was Foreign Secretary. The following pages on the subject are taken from an article written some years ago for 'The Edinburgh Review'—

The North-West Frontier of India, from the Himalayas to the sea, is covered by a belt of rugged mountainous territory, which forms a great natural barrier between our Indian Empire and the countries of Central Asia. This mountain belt is pierced here and there by more or less difficult passes, some of which from time immemorial have served as trade routes, and have also witnessed the march of invading armies. It is inhabited by wild marauding tribes, which have for centuries been practically independent. The strength of these tribes cannot be estimated with accuracy, but in all probability the total population of the tract is between a million and two

millions. When Sind and the Punjab were annexed, about fifty years ago, our dominions were brought up to the edge of the mountain belt, and ever since that time we have been trying to solve the question how we ought to deal with the tribes and their country.

There are two points of view from which this question can be considered. In the first place, it can be considered as a question of border management, affecting merely the peace of our frontier districts and their security from tribal raids, or at most affecting in some degree our relations with neighbouring Asiatic States. Secondly, it can be considered in a larger aspect, with regard to the defence of India against attack by a foreign European Power.

. . . . . .

Unfortunately, from whichever point of view the question be considered, whether as a question of border management or as a question of defence against foreign invasion, we have no general consensus of opinion among the authorities primarily concerned. On the contrary, we find that there is a very sharp conflict of views; and it is by no means easy for any one who approaches the matter in an impartial spirit to arrive at a definite and satisfying conclusion upon the arguments of the opposing schools.

As regards the measures which we should take to make our frontier secure against foreign invasion, the military authorities are not agreed. Some consider the Indus Valley our proper line of defence. They hold that we should abstain from any advance into the mountainous and difficult countries beyond the confines of India, and should make ready to meet attack upon our own border, concentrating and husbanding our strength, and leaving to an invader the task of overcoming the great geographical difficulties in the way, and the resistance of the intervening populations. Others declare that, not only for purely strategical reasons, but in order to maintain the confidence and loyalty of our native troops and of India, and to carry with us the mountain tribes and the

doubtful populations of Central Asia, we must hold the mountain passes, and meet by a vigorous offensive defence beyond those passes any enemy who may venture to approach us.

This is generally regarded as the view of Lord Roberts.

As regards the question of border management, we have again a division of opinion between two schools. The one school holds as a general principle that we should avoid all unnecessary interference with the tribes, treating them in a friendly manner when they behave well, and punishing them when they molest us, but not attempting to occupy their territory, to send British officers among them, or to establish over them any sort of control. The other school holds that we should encourage our officers to enter into close personal relations with the tribesmen and to enter their country, and should endeavour in course of time to establish permanent control over the tribes, and to introduce among them something like peace and order.

This was the view of Sandeman. His school and that of Lord Roberts were natural allies.

These passages state the question as it stood at the beginning of Lord Lytton's viceroyalty. Sandeman's advance into tribal territory at the southern end of our long frontier line was the forerunner of similar advances farther north, until at last, rightly or wrongly, the methods he advocated have established themselves, with certain modifications, along the whole line from the Himalayas to the Indian Ocean. The Roberts-Sandeman policy has prevailed.

There has been much discussion about particular phases of this operation, and some ebbs and flows of feeling as failure or success seemed to attend

them; but, whether for good or for evil, the general principle of the more active school has been accepted by the Government of India. It should be borne in mind that this refers only to the question of the frontier tribes, not to the question of the "Forward Policy" in Central Asia, which is a larger matter.

When the Treaty of Gandamak had been signed and ratified Lyall felt much happier. He had strongly advocated immediate action after the repulse of the Chamberlain Mission, and he was satisfied with the result. He was, of course, not so sanguine as to suppose that all our difficulties in Afghanistan were over. The good faith and capacity of the Amir were almost unknown qualities, and on them the smooth working of our new relations would largely depend. Also Lyall regarded the Afghans in general as treacherous barbarians, with whom it was an unfortunate necessity to have any dealings at all. He had carefully studied not only the history of our first Afghan war, forty years earlier, but the whole history of the Afghans, and he knew what a turbulent race they were. "I fear that our work is not over," he wrote to Cavagnari, "and that many complications remain to be solved; but you have done a great deal towards a settlement." With Kandahar in our hands we had, he thought, "a hook in the Afghan nose," and he hoped all might go well. Still he was not over confident nor in very good spirits. Our recent misfortunes in Zululand, especially the slaughter of our troops at Isandula, were, he said, a warning to all invaders,

and he was rather doubtful of his own capacity for the work he had to do. Shortly before the treaty was signed he writes to Mrs Holland—

I myself am doing pretty well; though I repeat that I do not make a first-class Secretary, the real habit and strength of my mind is reflection, and when I have not the time to reflect and work out ideas I become bothered and dispirited.

But others thought that he did make a first-class Secretary. One could hardly imagine a better for any Viceroy who was more than a figure-head. It is true that in important matters working against time troubled Lyall, and was a strain upon him. When any question was presented to him he saw much that the majority of men did not see; and this very quickness of perception made him at times seem slow in coming to the point. Men who saw less decided more easily. Yet, though he suffered from being "hustled," he could make up his mind rapidly enough when it was necessary to do so, and he was very tenacious of his opinions once they were formed. It seemed to me—and Under-Secretaries are apt to be critical—that for quickness and depth of insight, for knowledge of Oriental character, and for power of expression in writing, it would have been hard to find his equal.

It need hardly be pointed out that his work had been incessant, and very responsible. While Lord Lytton corresponded personally, and most laboriously, with the Secretary of State for India and many others, both in India and in England, it fell to the Foreign Secretary to carry on the large official

correspondence which the war entailed, and to manage the whole political department attached to the generals in the field. It has usually been thought desirable in our Eastern wars to have a staff of political officers with our armies. They carry on the dealings between the general in command and the natives of the country, collect intelligence, and sometimes supplies, and keep the Government in touch with all that is going on. They have often been given a position of too much independence, and their proceedings have been much resented by military commanders; but in countries where military operations are not carried on by regular armies on both sides it has been found impracticable to dispense with them, and many commanders have known how to make good use of their services. Lyall was well fitted to manage this important and delicate branch of his duties, for he had served with troops in the Mutiny and knew exactly what was required of political officers on active service. His keen sympathy with soldiers was a further help to him. But the work was almost overwhelming. His private correspondence with the military chiefs—Sir Frederick Roberts, Sir Donald Stewart, and others, and with the numerous political officers, Cavagnari at Gandamak, Sandeman at Quetta, St John at Kandahar—would fill many volumes. Meanwhile he had to advise the Government on every sort of question arising out of the war, and to carry on simultaneously the ordinary work of the office, which was always heavy enough in itself.

Lyall had at this time a great pleasure in the society of his younger sister Barbara, afterwards Mrs Webb, who had come out during the autumn to spend some months with him. She was a clever woman, with much of his brightness in conversation and quick sense of humour. Perhaps in some respects she was more like him than any other member of his family, and they were very happy together. Whether she made it easier for him to maintain his reputation as a grave official may be doubted, for she had a deplorable habit of laughing at the most solemn functions, and sometimes at the most solemn people; but her visit gave him much enjoyment, and relief from the cares of office.

His satisfaction at the peace was due in part to a feeling which often finds expression in his letters—regret and something like anger at any waste of English lives. The destruction of the 24th Foot in Zululand moved him deeply, as did the unfortunate accident by which a considerable number of the 10th Hussars were drowned in the Kabul river. "I must say," he writes, "that I grudge English lives in these savage countries. I sometimes wish that the English had stayed at home, and had not got into the way of incessant fighting for land all over the world." He had not entirely approved of the policy followed in South Africa, but he writes of Sir Bartle Frere: "I can at this moment quite realise his feelings, for I know exactly how we should all feel if the Afghans cut up a whole regiment of ours in the passes." There was no man less inclined than Lyall to a policy of rash adventure,

for no one hated bloodshed more sincerely. He was to suffer much in this way before he had done with Afghanistan. But for the present there was no prospect of further fighting, for the Government of India had succeeded in avoiding a rupture with the bloodthirsty maniac who then ruled Burmah; and on the side of the North-West the Empire seemed to have been properly fenced in. The brave and ill-fated Colley had left India for Natal. Cavagnari had said good-bye to us all on the tennis-ground at "Innes's Own," and started for Kabul to take up his post as British Resident. Lord Lawrence was dead, and his policy seemed to have died with him. Lyall had been made a Companion of the Bath, and was entirely satisfied with that not very excessive reward for his hard and responsible work. It was a distinction, for unfortunately the order is, in India, practically confined to soldiers. He had begun to think of resuming literary work, which he had perforce completely abandoned, and even to dream of another visit to England, for he was longing to feel the atmosphere of Europe again. But there was soon a terrible interruption to the peace and happiness of that triumphant Simla season. Lord Lytton had just three months in which to enjoy the congratulations of the Ministry in England and of his numerous friends. Then the blow fell which was to turn triumph into mourning, and rest into the labours and anxieties of another war.

On the morning of the 5th September I had gone out for my early ride in the Simla woods, thinking of

nothing less than any catastrophe in Kabul, where the last telegrams reported all well. When I got back to my house I found a note from Lyall asking me to go over at once to "Innes's Own," and remounting my pony I cantered over as fast as I could, by the narrow downhill road among the pines and rhododendrons. On arrival I went up to his study, and saw at once that something had happened. His face was white and drawn, and his manner disturbed. He asked me sharply, in a tone very unusual with him, why I had not come sooner. I told him that I had lost no time, and felt inclined to resent his peremptory way of speaking, but his next words drove every thought of the kind from my head. He said there was bad news from Kabul, that the Afghan troops had risen and attacked the Residency, and that he feared the whole Mission and escort had been massacred. He was deeply moved, and though he began working at once, despatching telegrams and letters with his usual rapidity, he could not refrain from breaking off to express his sorrow and pity at the fate of Cavagnari and those who had fallen with him. Though by this time I had got to know him well, I was surprised by the intensity of his personal distress on their account. He could not bear the idea that they had died with despair in their hearts, longing for the help that could not come. He even blamed himself for the whole disaster. "We should never have allowed Cavagnari to take up his quarters in the Bala Hissar. Even in Hyderabad our Residency is some distance outside the city. We should have insisted upon the

Amir giving them some place outside Kabul. That is my fault. I ought to have made Lord Lytton insist upon it. Of course he could not understand the danger. If I had made him insist on it they might all have been alive now."

This self-blame was wholly unjust. On such a point we were bound to defer to the judgment of the Amir. If he thought the Bala Hissar at Kabul the safest place for the Residency, the Government of India would have incurred a grave responsibility, one which it had no right to incur, in overruling him. Lyall soon came to recognise this, for I do not remember his ever blaming himself again. Later in the day the melancholy news was confirmed by further telegrams.

The immediate result of the massacre was an advance on Kabul by General Roberts, whose force was nearer to that place than any other British troops. As the attack on the Residency was represented by the Amir in the light of a mutinous rising which he had done all he could to suppress, he was informed that General Roberts was coming to his assistance, and he was requested to facilitate the advance. In reality he did what he could to delay it; but General Roberts refused to be stopped, and on the 27th of September the Amir himself arrived with his Ministers in the British camp at Khushi. Then followed a further advance; a fight on the 6th of October at Charasia, where, with or without the Amir's consent, an Afghan force had assembled to dispute our passage; and, a couple of days later, the

arrival of our troops at Kabul itself. On the 12th of October General Roberts made his formal entry into the Bala Hissar. Early that morning the unhappy Amir had walked up to the British camp on the Siah Sung heights, and expressed his intention of resigning his throne. He was quite broken, and declared that he would rather be a grass-cutter in the British camp than make any further attempt at ruling the Afghans.

At this time I was no longer with Lyall, having, to my great pleasure, been appointed to serve under General Roberts as Political Secretary. During the winter of 1879 I remained with the force, and therefore knew only from the official correspondence, supplemented by occasional letters from Lyall, how affairs were going with him in India. It must have been a trying time; for the Amir's abdication had left Afghanistan without a ruler, and our Government had to decide what to do with the country thus thrown upon our hands. To make matters worse, there was much excitement among the Afghan tribes; and early in December, after the departure of the Amir for India, it became clear that serious trouble was impending. Armed bodies of Afghans began to collect round our small force at Kabul; on the 11th December a British detachment was roughly handled in the Chardeh valley; and three days later, after striking some heavy blows at the gathering clans, General Roberts found their numbers so overwhelming that he decided to withdraw from all isolated positions and concentrate his troops in the fortified cantonment of

Sherpur. The enemy was not finally dispersed until just before Christmas; and meanwhile there was the deepest anxiety in India, where the disasters of the first Afghan war had never been forgotten. It can easily be imagined that this state of affairs brought upon Lord Lytton and his Foreign Secretary much vehement criticism. The new policy of activity in Afghanistan was held responsible for the war and all its consequences; and the Lawrence school again raised its head.

This part of the question need not be discussed now. But incidentally the war showed me a side of Lyall's character which was new to me, or which at least I had not fully appreciated. During the last three years I had learnt to admire very greatly not only his abilities, but his strong patriotic feeling and his pride in his countrymen. I now saw him from another point of view, and soon came to understand that he possessed what is curiously rare — a warm and steadfast loyalty towards men serving at a distance. Anything more considerate than his care for us, who, to use his words, were "fighting for your lives in the snow," cannot be imagined. While scrupulously careful to ask from us nothing inconsistent with our subordination and allegiance to the General in command—a General whom no one could help loving—he tried to foresee all our difficulties and to provide for them beforehand. I never received from him a word of impatience or criticism,—nothing but kindly appreciation and encouragement. The difference between working for a

man who has sufficient imagination and good feeling to behave in that way, and working for one who is selfish or careless, can be understood only by those who have tried it. Every political officer in Afghanistan owed a deep debt of gratitude to Lyall, and we knew it well. As one illustration of his thoughtfulness, it happened that on the day of the retirement into Sherpur I had just finished the despatch of a telegram to the Foreign Office when the line was cut by the enemy: an overdriven Foreign Secretary might well have forgotten everything except the work in hand, but it occurred to him that the news of hard fighting and of our being surrounded would come as a shock to my wife, and he at once telegraphed to assure her that all was well with me.

Lyall's work during this winter, and during the year which followed, was again very heavy, and the mass of "demi-official" correspondence which remains to attest it is enormous. There are in his boxes many hundreds of letters to and from the military chiefs and political officers across the border. But though these letters are interesting, it would be impossible, without writing this memoir upon a disproportionate scale, to enter upon any review of the innumerable questions with which they deal.

As regards one point—the permanent occupation of Afghan territory—it may be noted that he held throughout a decided opinion. In the end of 1879 he writes that he had been

quite in favour of vigorous action last year to counteract the Russians, who were establishing a footing in the country,

and would have made themselves very troublesome, if not dangerous, had we not struck in; but I have been steadily in favour of keeping free, so far as possible, from Afghan complications, and I am dead against anything like annexation. As things are now going, it may become a necessity eventually to take part of the country, but I would hold off as long and as strenuously as possible.

On that view he consistently acted, for he saw clearly, as all thinking men must do, the danger of extending our responsibilities when the supply of British bayonets is so closely limited.

Early in 1880 the Under Secretaryship in the Foreign Office fell vacant, and at his request Lord Lytton appointed me to the post, which I joined in the month of February, thus coming once more into direct personal relations with Lyall. Soon afterwards he decided to go himself to Kabul, to see the place and discuss the situation with General Roberts and Lepel Griffin, a well-known Punjab officer, who had been sent up to help with the political work in Northern Afghanistan. It was being strongly urged at this time that the country should be broken up, a permanent British garrison being retained in Kandahar, and the Western Province of Herat being made independent of Kabul. The question was what to do with the Kabul province itself, which we did not desire to annex or garrison.

Lyall started from Calcutta in March 1880. I was dining with him on the night of his departure, and noticed that he was depressed, as he was apt to be when setting out upon a journey. Five minutes

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before he was to leave the house he was warned that the time was nearly up. He looked worried, and said he wished he were not going; upon which his wife laughingly offered to go with him to Allahabad—twenty-four hours' journey. "I wish you would," he said. She got up, and went out of the room, to return within the five minutes, a travelling-bag in her hand, ready to start. Lyall went off looking much happier. It was characteristic of them both, and of India.

After leaving the line of rail he had to ride some two hundred miles over rough country, from the border to Kabul. He arrived there safely, though there was at the time some trouble on the road, and one or two of our officers had been killed. Lyall enjoyed the long ride through the historic scenes where, both in the first Afghan war and again in the second, there had been so much hard fighting. His road lay through the Khyber Pass, Ali Musjid, Jellalabad, renowned for its defence by the "illustrious garrison," Jugdulluk, where in the disastrous retreat of 1842 the remnant of our fighting men made their last stand and were overwhelmed by numbers. At Kabul itself he was received by General Roberts, who showed him the Residency, the battlefield of Charasia, and other notable places.

It was all deeply interesting to him; and the change and exercise after so many months of desk work were very refreshing. It was exactly the time to visit Kabul, a delightful place in spring, when the young crops are green, and the orchards coming into

blossom, and the magnificent snow-clad Pughman range seems to overhang the valley, with the "mysterious Hindu Kush" in the far horizon.

I can easily sympathise [Lyall writes] with the Afghan's love for his country, and his hatred against those who disturb him, although he has no scruple in disturbing others, to the best of his savage ability.

Afghanistan, Lyall found, was politically in chaos, and he thought it very difficult to see a way out.

The powerful Khans of the hill tribes, the only solid personages in the country, rather enjoy the confusion, and strengthen themselves in their fastnesses; the men of the plains and hill-skirts, whose villages are all forts, have paid no revenue for two years, and are all agreed to pay none except on compulsion; trade is at a standstill; and the whole country is waiting to see what we shall do. If we set up an Amir and leave him, the people will roll him over in a month; if we leave without setting up any one, there will be fierce and prolonged faction fighting throughout the land. I have never witnessed a more curious or more awkward political dilemma; and I am mentally edging back towards old John Lawrence's counsel, never to embark on the shoreless sea of Afghan politics. But our hands were forced, first by the Russian mission to Kabul, second by Cavagnari's murder. . . . We have no friends here; why should we have any?

In April Lyall returned, riding fifty miles a-day over the rough mountainous road, and rejoined Lord Lytton. Not very long before this our difficulties in Northern Afghanistan had been increased by the appearance on the Oxus of the pretender Abdurrahman Khan, whom the Russians had let loose after ten years'

detention in Transcaspia. He afterwards proved to be most useful.

Before Lyall rejoined his post the general election of 1880 had, to the surprise of Lord Lytton and of most people in India, resulted in a sweeping victory for the Liberals; and as his policy in India had been fiercely attacked by them, he decided to go out with his political friends. I was with him in Calcutta when the telegrams giving the result of the elections began to come in, and I can remember the consternation they caused. At first Lord Lytton was still hopeful, believing that the counties might redress the balance, but one evening he saw that all was over, and told me he intended to resign. So, two months later, with Afghanistan in dire confusion, and his policy condemned and reversed, he handed over charge to his successor. To make matters worse, there had been a financial catastrophe, owing to an incomprehensible blunder in estimating the cost of military operations, and for this he was held responsible. It was a tragic ending to his Viceroyalty, and an unfortunate precedent, for Viceroys of India should not be subject to the vicissitudes of political parties in England.

In the course of the summer matters were arranged with Abdurrahman Khan, and he was allowed to take over the Province of Kabul, as Lord Lytton had intended, our troops under General Stewart withdrawing to India. This they did without molestation, the Afghans in the north having had enough of fighting, and being, as Lyall said, "evidently resolved not to tread on the snake's tail." But meanwhile, in the

south of Afghanistan, we had been overtaken by a sudden and grievous disaster. At Maiwand, near Kandahar, a brigade of our troops had been completely routed, with heavy loss, by the Afghan pretender, Ayub Khan; and Kandahar itself, where there was a considerable British garrison, had been invested by the enemy. This was a formidable beginning for the rule of the new Viceroy, Lord Ripon. The fall of Kandahar would have been a very serious matter, and the defeat itself was bad enough. There was not only sorrow but wrath and recrimination. Some of the soldiers blamed the political officers, who were said to have given imperfect information, while the political officers thought the action of the military commanders had been inept. Lyall was much distressed at the loss of life and the discredit to our arms. Not only had our troops suffered severely, but as he said, "no such indisputable victory over British forces in the open field had been gained by an Asiatic leader in all our long Indian wars." He wrote about it to Mrs Holland in the following words:—

You will have heard, long ago, that another vial of apocalyptic wrath has been uncorked upon our ill-fated Afghan politics, and that chap. iii. of the history of the war has opened with a catastrophe. You will never realise what it is to sit quietly at one's table, and suddenly to open a telegram conveying news of death and disaster. This has happened to me twice within the twelvemonth. . . . But the disaster was bad enough, God knows, a second Isandula, . . . and the result is to plunge our Afghan policy into confusion again. The consequences cannot yet be foreseen, but there will be complications only to be cut by the sword. We were just

going to evacuate Kabul, having succeeded in placing Abdurrahman on some sort of shaky throne there; and now our poor troops have, instead of going home, to cut their way to Kandahar. . . . I should like to go up myself, and go I will soon; again to see the faces of men hard-set with excitement and danger, instead of sitting here opening telegrams. . . . Well, I am very sick of it, and the stars fight against us in their courses.

Lord Ripon, always cool and business-like, and coming to the Afghan work with a fresh mind, undisturbed by any responsibility for the past, set an admirable example in meeting the difficulty. It was at once arranged in communication with the military authorities that General Roberts, with a picked force, should march on Kandahar from Kabul and restore the situation. Every one knows what followed, how he covered the three hundred and thirteen miles in twenty-two days, relieved Kandahar, and falling upon the Afghan leader, Ayub Khan, totally dispersed the besieging army. To all of us in Simla the victory brought much pleasure and relief; and it is difficult to overestimate the value of this fine feat of arms upon public opinion throughout India, for it cannot be denied that the destruction of our force at Maiwand, and the investment of Kandahar, had seriously compromised our military reputation. The feeling had spread, not only among natives of India, that Afghanistan was an unlucky country for our arms, and that fresh mishaps were always to be apprehended so long as we remained beyond the passes. Even for General Roberts and his picked force of 10,000 men, "the finest force that ever

marched in India or Afghanistan," as Lyall said, there was for a time considerable anxiety.

Upon no one did it weigh more heavily than on him. He kept up a cheerful attitude throughout—and indeed he felt, and expressed, the most implicit confidence in the "dash and fighting power" of General Roberts, whose appointment to the command he had earnestly pressed upon Lord Ripon. He also felt certain that Sir Robert Sandeman, always to be trusted in time of need, would push up from the south every man available. But still there was room for anxiety, and on the 24th of August, while the march was in progress, came the news of an unsuccessful sortie from Kandahar, with heavy loss.

I am greatly grieved at the loss of our gallant officers [Lyall writes to his sister]. I am the single person who gets all this exciting intelligence, for St John, active, bold, and energetic always, manages to get messages through to me. . . . The result is that on the arrival of the news I edit and distribute it all over India and to England, and this is often a complicated and responsible business, for we can't tell everything to everybody, though we keep back no substantial news from the public.

One evening the relieving force had been out of touch with India for a day or two; but we were expecting to hear at any moment of its having emerged near Kandahar, and were anxiously awaiting news. Lyall was more than anxious. He was depressed by a foreboding of evil, and pictured to himself another massacre in the Afghan defiles. But he bore up well. I was dining with him that night,

as were several others, and he was as bright in his conversation as ever. In the middle of dinner the expected telegram came. The news was good, and he read it out. I left the room and went up to his study to send off some copies of the telegram; but two or three minutes later he joined me, and sat down in an arm-chair by the writing-table. It was no doubt an immense relief to him; but he was silent, and almost as much shaken as if he had received news of a disaster. Though he was cool and steady in public, his highly strung nature made him suffer intense anxiety at such times, and none but those who saw him from very near knew how much courage and self-control were needed to make him go about with a calm face and words of quiet confidence.

It is, I hope, hardly necessary to say that Lyall's acute feeling was mainly unselfish. No doubt he felt the weight of responsibility, but that was not what troubled him most. The honour of the country, and the lives of those who were facing danger for the country's sake, were far more to him than any selfish considerations. But this was practically the end of our military troubles in Afghanistan, for no Afghan force ever again made head against our troops.

In order to study the position in Southern Afghanistan on the spot, as he had studied the northern position earlier in the year at Kabul, Lyall went off in September by way of Sind and Quetta, to Kandahar. It was a troublesome journey, for at this time of the year the weather in the north of India is rather treacherous, with very hot days and cool nights. The

rainy season at Simla had given him a touch of sciatica, and the first night in the train brought on a sharp attack, which made it hopeless for him to face the long ride from the Indus to Quetta. He had to get out at Lahore, and remain there some days, chafing restlessly at the contretemps. It was just the sort of thing that worried Lyall disproportionately. He would not go back—"one always cuts a poor figure in a retreat," and he hated ridicule—while he felt that he might be indefinitely prevented from going on. However, after a few days he was able to go on, and though in bad health, he got to Quetta in the middle of October. The journey up from the Indus impressed him greatly.

> All is desolate as the shores of the Red Sea; you don't see a tree or a house in fifty miles of road; and I am told the desolation is worse between this and Kandahar. As I ride through this wretched waste and think how many men have died along these roads in the past two years, . . . I own to a fierce disgust.

In Quetta and Kandahar Lyall discussed matters with Sir Robert Sandeman, Sir Oliver St John, and others, and in spite of many opinions to the contrary he remained opposed to annexation. This was the view taken by the new Government in England, where the Afghan situation was then being considered.

In November 1880 orders were issued that Kandahar should be evacuated, and in January 1881 this policy was announced in the Queen's Speech. But after much discussion the districts of Peshin and Sibi, assigned to us by the treaty of Gandamak, were kept

in our hands; and of course Quetta, with the command of the Khojak Amram range, was also retained, for its value had been amply demonstrated during the war.

Lyall's term of the Foreign Secretaryship was now drawing to a close, and it is certain that those three troubled years had greatly increased his reputation in India. No service in India, except sometimes military service, can do much for a man's reputation with the public in England; but even in England, among the few who had to deal with Indian affairs, his name was now well known.

What Lord Ripon thought of his work was shown in the end of 1880, when his name was sent up for the honour of a Knighthood of the Bath. There was some difficulty about the grant of this decoration, but Lord Ripon persisted vigorously. He wrote to Lord Hartington, then Secretary of State for India—

I proposed that he should receive that distinction for the great and invaluable services which he has rendered to the Government of India throughout all the negotiations which have been going on with respect to Afghanistan. I have received from him throughout those negotiations an assistance which has been simply invaluable, and if such services are to be left without acknowledgment, I should be very much inclined to withdraw every recommendation which I have made for rewards to any one. Whether he receives a K.C.S.I. or K.C.B. does not signify; but I say without hesitation that I am utterly ashamed to accept such thanks as you and Gladstone have been good enough to give me, if the man to whom those thanks are much more really due is to be left without any kind of acknowledgment. I must honestly say that I should be deeply and personally disappointed if Lyall's services are

not adequately acknowledged, and that it would place me in a very painful position. . . . I should be very sorry to enter into any controversy . . . as to which is the higher order of the two—the Bath or the Star of India—but there can be no doubt which is the oldest.

Such a tribute to the worth of Lyall's work could hardly be set aside, and the K. C. B. was given.

It was said at the time that the reluctance to grant the decoration was due to the opinion prevalent in English official circles that Lyall was one of "Lord Lytton's men,"—Lord Lytton being then anathema to the new Government; but certainly Lord Ripon's recommendation in his favour was as warm as any sent by Lord Lytton. It is of more importance that Lyall was criticised because he managed to work for both Viceroys, and for both of two conflicting policies. There is no ground for blaming him on this account. The course taken throughout accorded very closely with his views. He thought that when a Russian mission was received in Kabul, while a mission from us was refused, it was necessary to bring pressure on the Amir and insist upon our being properly treated. The situation was so entirely novel, and so inconsistent with the assurances which we had received both from the Amir and from Russia, that it could hardly have been tolerated. That situation once redressed, Lyall's inclination was, as he said from the first, to "do as little as possible," and, above all, to avoid any unnecessary annexations. If the lessons of the war accentuated this natural inclina-

tion, it is not surprising; but the whole bent of his mind was against rash adventures, and from the beginning he was a moderating influence. Possibly Lord Lytton, sore at the unfair attacks made upon him, may have been inclined to think that Lyall had not been as staunch to his policy as he would have liked; but Lord Lytton knew Lyall's tendencies from the outset, and hesitated on that account to make him Foreign Secretary. It is difficult to see any inconsistency in Lyall's course of action.

In the spring of 1881 he had gone up to Simla with the Government of India. He was then not in good health. "I go about," he writes, "tottering and bent double, like one of those poor old Sussex labourers who used to catch chronic rheumatism in the clay ditches about Lyne." He was alone, too, for his wife and sister had gone to England. But he had arranged to share a house with his old friend, Charles Grant,[1] who was then Home Secretary, and the arrangement answered well, for Mrs Grant was a kindly and tactful hostess. Before long Lyall was in good health again and fairly contented.

All through his time as Foreign Secretary he had been so much occupied by the affairs of Afghanistan that it had been hardly possible for him to get through the mass of other work which had to be done. There used at times to be dreadful accumulations of boxes in his room at the Foreign Office, and as Under Secretary I had to go to him periodically and get him to come and clear them off. I used to

[1] Afterwards Sir Charles Grant, K.C.S.I.

open box after box, and take out file after file, explaining what each was about, while Lyall sat sighing wearily at intervals, or gazing out through the pines at the deep blue valley below us, and the grassy slopes of Tara Devi beyond, and the eagles wheeling in the cloudless sky. But his quick mind was seizing all the points of the cases, and now and then he would break in with some pertinent question. When I had got to the end I would hand the file to him, and he would look over it and write an order, and toss it aside. I can hear the thud now as the heavy file went down upon the druggeted pinewood floor. All cases dealing with district administration I left alone, as my own training had been almost entirely on the diplomatic side of the service; and these he used to put by with a sigh, as also any others about which I had doubts. Sometimes I would find them there next clearing day. But in this way he would get through in two or three hours a stack of office boxes six feet high. Then he would say: "That will do, I cannot stand any more to-day. Come for a walk," and we would stroll off round Summer Hill or towards Jutogh.

On one of those walks we met at a rocky turn of the road behind Prospect Hill a lady riding alone. Her husband had been knighted some days before. Lyall talked to her for some time—too long I thought. When he went on he said something pleasant about her, and I answered, rather maliciously, "Yes, but you shouldn't have called her Mrs C—." It was the kind of little mistake which he intensely disliked

making, and he stopped short in the road and smote his leg, and said, "Damn it."

On the 10th of April he writes—

We are just clearing out of Kandahar, and I am, as usual, on the strain of ever-present anxiety about the course of affairs. We shall walk out easily enough; but whether Abdurrahman won't be walked out after us in a few months is another question. If he is driven out by Ayub, people will condemn the whole arrangement, and Lord Ripon will get no credit at all from the Jingoes, &c., but the reverse. To me, in my interior mind, it will make no difference; I don't think we ought to stay on any account, and I believe all the Afghans agree with me. . . . I was quite in favour of the first war, when we struck down the Amir because he took up with Russia, yet when it comes to annexing a great province of Afghanistan I draw back altogether.

To any intermediate measure, such as a temporary occupation, or the permanent retention of a garrison in Kandahar without annexing, Lyall was thoroughly opposed. He knew the danger of setting up a puppet ruler, and he could see no use in delay.

There were but two things to do with Kandahar—to annex the town and country round to make it a British possession, or to give it back to the Afghans; and I have no doubt that the latter course is the right one.

We evacuated Kandahar without trouble, leaving the Amir Abdurrahman to settle himself there if he could, and the military operations in Afghanistan were at last over. The war had been the ruin of the "Forward Policy"; but at the close of it we were not exactly where we had been before it. The

Afghans had lost faith in Russia, and had agreed to have no dealings with foreign powers; their hold upon the Khyber Pass, the great highway from India to Kabul, had been broken, and the Khyber tribes had been taken into our service. Farther south we retained the Kurram valley, which gave us an alternative route into the country. And instead of having the Beluchistan deserts in front of us, we had taken possession of Quetta, with the outlying districts of Peshin and Sibi, and were in a position to march into Kandahar in a few days at any moment. Undoubtedly we were much better placed for fighting an enemy in Afghanistan than we had been five years earlier. Whatever the consequences to himself, Lord Lytton had some right to feel that his work in India had left its mark. No one, probably, now maintains that the war was wholly without good results, though in the course of it many mistakes may have been made, and many wild schemes of advance into the heart of Central Asia may have been put forward. Above all, we had learned, though at great cost, some valuable lessons both about our power and about its limitations.

On the Queen's birthday, the 24th of May 1881, Lyall received his well-earned Knighthood of the Bath, and innumerable congratulations thereupon.

For a few months longer he remained in Simla. The situation was still not wholly free from anxiety; and though longing for leave and a rest in England, he did not like to desert Lord Ripon so long as there was any prospect of further trouble. It is true that our

troops were now out of the country, and there was therefore no chance of any such catastrophe as the battle of Maiwand; but the Amir whom we had recognised was being attacked by his cousin, the victor in that battle, and there was at one moment some probability of his overthrow, which might have led to awkward consequences for us. Happily the Amir held his own; and before the middle of September Lyall was able to take his furlough with a clear conscience, handing over charge of the Foreign Office to his old friend Charles Grant. It was well understood that he would not return to it, and that on the expiration of his leave he was to become Lieutenant-Governor of the North-West Provinces.

Before he left he was entertained at a large public dinner, and made an excellent speech. This was not a common thing with him; for though the matter of his speeches, when he prepared them, was always good, his voice was neither clear nor resonant, and his delivery was imperfect. But on this occasion he spoke feelingly, and his remarks were very well received. Lord Ripon also gave a farewell dinner in his honour, after which there was held in the ball-room at Peterhof a special investiture of the Bath, at which he was knighted and decorated. Charles Grant, the new Foreign Secretary, having no full-dress uniform at hand, I had to take his place as Secretary of the Order, and it gave me real pleasure to assist in the little ceremony. Lyall "had an accursed headache, and could not look other than a knight of sorrowful countenance"; but he was

touched at the attention shown to him, and surprised at finding himself so popular.

Three days later he left Simla, and I find a hasty note in my diary: "Lyall left this morning, I must say to my great regret, and he felt it a good deal. His good-bye to me was really affectionate, and I could not help a feeling of *bouleversement* at the severing of our long connection. He has been a good friend to me."

It speaks well for an official chief, I think, when his subordinates feel in that way about him.

CHAPTER XII.

LAST PERIOD OF INDIAN SERVICE.

1881–1887.

Return to literature—Lyall becomes Lieutenant-Governor of the North-West Provinces—Murder of Cavendish and Burke—Correspondence with John Morley—The association of Indians with the administration—'Asiatic Studies'—Lord Ripon's Indian reforms—Was Lyall suspicious?—Success of his verses—Theosophy—Study of native opinion—The Ilbert Bill—An understanding with Russia—Local self-government—Lord Dufferin becomes Viceroy—The Amir comes to India—The Panjdeh incident—The conquest of Burma—Review of Lyall's Lieutenant-Governorship—Farewell to India.

DURING his leave in England Lyall wrote for the 'Fortnightly' an article on the "Relations of Religion to Asiatic States"—the first article he had written for three years, since he became involved in the heavy work of the Indian Foreign Office. About this article John Morley wrote in January 1882—

The paper interests me, and will interest other people, extremely. It is quite in the vein of your other pieces, and is as successful as any of them in the strange luminousness with which it brings obscure and unintelligible phenomena of queer religions into visible order. You are the only living master of this gift, which is worth a million times more than any amount of abstract theory-spinning about the Three Stages, et cetera.

Your sharp concluding sentence makes me long for the time when you shall think it seemly to say your say about

the politics of Christianity. You must come to that business some day, and I hope that I may be there to see.

It goes without saying that I welcome your paper for the 'Fortnightly,'—thrice and four times welcome. It shall go in, of course, whenever you please. The sooner the better, so far as I am concerned.

The article appeared in February. Beyond writing it, I cannot find that Lyall did much; he was thoroughly tired, and wanted all the rest he could get. He found it after his manner in the society of interesting people—John Morley, Henry Reeve of the 'Edinburgh,' Matthew Arnold, Fitzjames and Leslie Stephen, Arthur Hobhouse, and others. He had become a member of the Athenæum, and during the winter of 1881 was frequently to be found there, reading and writing, or talking to a friend in some corner where the sacred silence could legitimately be broken. He got much attached to the Athenæum, which is in truth a pleasant place for men of his tastes. But that was later. In the spring of 1882 he had to leave London to take up his Lieutenant-Governorship.

Lyall had now reached the highest rung of the Indian official ladder. Occasionally a member of the Indian Civil Service is selected for one of the Governorships of Madras or Bombay; and in one instance, that of John Lawrence, a member of the service has been made Viceroy of India. But this was due to the extraordinary circumstances of the Mutiny; and even the Governorships afford too valuable a field of patronage to be often conferred upon men who

have no political influence, probably not even a vote.

Moreover, British Governments no doubt sincerely believe, and have some ground for believing, that these high appointments can be better filled by men of rank and standing in England than by men who have spent their whole official lives in India, and are supposed to be not only more or less out of touch with English thought and feeling, but possibly imbued with local prejudices and hampered by local connections. As a set-off against the various advantages which the English peer or politician is supposed to have over the Indian official, experience of India counts for little, and any claims on that score are apt to be regarded with impatience. This is natural; for the value of such experience cannot be understood by those who do not know the country. Englishmen who are accustomed to see their army and navy managed by civilians without military or naval experience are not likely to imagine that there is anything of anomaly or danger in sending men without any expert knowledge to be Governors in India. The cases are not parallel, and strong arguments could be brought forward on the other side; but undoubtedly there is much to be said for the existing system, at least as regards the Viceroyalty. An Indian civilian or soldier appointed to that great office must find himself labouring under some disadvantages, the most serious and harmful of these being the want of social and political influence in England, which would make it difficult for him to

hold his own in case of attack. This would be a misfortune, not only for himself. The treatment meted out to Warren Hastings cannot be forgotten. He was, to use Lord Curzon's words, "the greatest man ever sent out by England to govern India"; yet he was hampered and thwarted throughout his term of office; and on his return he was virulently attacked by one party and left without support by the other. Times have changed, no doubt, but the position of a Viceroy without family influence might still be a dangerous one. However this may be, the existing system is firmly established, and in India it is understood that, under ordinary conditions, the Lieutenant-Governorship of a province is the highest post open to a member of the Civil Service.

To this position Lyall had now attained. Beginning as a young assistant magistrate in Bulandshahr, and holding successively the charge of a district, of a division, of the Home Office, of a great political agency, and of the Foreign Office, he now found himself the ruler of the Province in which he had started twenty-five years before, together with the adjoining territory of Oudh, which had lately been added to it. The whole charge comprised a tract of country nearly the size of Great Britain, with a population of more than forty millions. It was a fine position, in which a man had large powers for good or evil.

Conditions have altered, and the personal power of the officers who rule these great provinces is no longer what it was. As a native gentleman lately wrote to

me, a Lieutenant-Governor was regarded in those days by the natives of India with a "respect and awe of which the present generation has no idea." I believe this is true; and time will show whether the change, which is largely due to our own action, is a change for the better. But, however this may be, Lieutenant-Governors were regarded thirty years ago as officers of very high rank, whose opinions were to be treated with respect, not only by natives of India, but by Viceroys and Secretaries of State; and among all the provincial rulers of the day, none, I think, came to the work with a better reputation than Alfred Lyall.

On his way out to take up his post, he passed through Egypt, and was much impressed by the gravity of the state of affairs in that country. The power of the Khedive was gone, his Ministers were not much better off, and the army was really master of the situation. What happens in Egypt is always of interest to India, for various reasons, but especially because so large a part of the Indian population consists of Mussulmans. It seemed to Lyall that the situation was most unstable; and, as a matter of fact, the outbreak which he apprehended was not long in coming. But for the moment Egypt remained at peace, and the road to India was still open. On the 17th of April he took charge of his new duties.

During the hot weather the Lieutenant-Governor of the North-West Provinces, and the principal officials of his Government, used to spend some months at Naini Tal in the Himalayas, six or seven thousand

feet above the sea. Lyall had passed through it during his first year in India, and in a way was always fond of the place, for the climate was good and the scenery beautiful, with a grand view of the snowy range to the northward. Here he established himself soon after his return to India, and in coolness and comfort set to work upon the administration of his province. The greater part of the charge consisted of old-established districts, with well-trained district officers, and a good secretariat, and there was practically no external frontier to give trouble. Moreover, Lyall was thoroughly familiar by this time with the various administrative questions which come before a Lieutenant-Governor, and had much personal knowledge of the people. To him, therefore, the work was not overwhelming; and he now found time to resume his correspondence with friends at home, and to indulge again his old love of literature.

Lyall's pleasure in taking over charge of the North-West Provinces was not, however, wholly unmixed with regret. He was not very well, and he had some doubt whether it would not have suited him better to be appointed a Member of Council in India, which would have kept him at headquarters, and in touch with the larger questions of policy there under discussion. In the comparative isolation of Naini Tal, and dealing with local administration only, he was inclined to feel a little "shelved." It was very much what he had felt before, when he left the Home Office for Rajputana. He had no ground for complaint in the matter, for in 1881, before he went on furlough, Lord

Ripon had practically given him the choice of the two positions. But at that time it was believed that the vacancy in Council would not occur until 1883, and in the circumstances Lyall had decided for the Lieutenant-Governorship. As it turned out, the vacancy in Council occurred at the same time as the vacancy in the North-West Provinces, and it was then too late to upset the arrangements made. This somewhat troubled Lyall, who worried himself with the idea that he had made a mistake. He was further somewhat exercised in mind by hearing that her Majesty's Government had some thought of sending a special mission to Persia in connection with the northern and eastern frontiers of that country, and that if he had not been appointed to the North-West Provinces he would not improbably have been selected for this duty. The prospect of a diplomatic mission of this kind to Central Asia had much attraction for him, and the administration of a settled Indian province seemed rather tame in comparison.

His first letters from Naini Tal therefore are not written in very good spirits. I see that he wrote to me, among others, about the Council, and I answered that Lieutenant-Governors had the finer position of the two—that he would be much more independent. Others, I believe, gave a similar reply; and as the special mission did not take place he soon got over his depression.

Just at this time occurred the murder of Lord Frederick Cavendish and Mr Burke in the Phœnix Park, a crime which aroused Lyall's indignation to a

very high degree. Whatever men might say about his tendency to see too many sides of a question, and to be slow in making up his mind, he never had the smallest doubt with regard to one thing—that every Government is bound to maintain order with a strong hand; and in a letter to John Morley he lashes out on this subject in no uncertain terms. Strong Liberal as he was, he had come to feel a deep distrust of Mr Gladstone's capacity for practical administration, and he writes of

the dangerous toleration of incapacity exhibited by the English people in allowing themselves to be blinded to the terrible mess the Ministry has for six months past been making in Ireland.

In words curiously different from his usual style of reserve he goes on—

However, you will have had plenty of this talk in the opposition journals; only do throw all your influence into the balance of simply going back to the first duty of Governments—the protection of life—and stick to that resolutely, discarding all other issues, such as whether the revolt is political or social, on which Gladstone periodically lectures. If ever the word "blood-guiltiness" should be used against a politician, it applies to the men who let women and their own officers be cruelly killed by assassins who could be put down in three months. Our country is being disgraced in the eyes of the civilised world; nor is it the fault of our rulers at home that misrule and violence do not spread abroad. India is just now wonderfully quiet; but what sort of a lesson are you teaching to the dangerous classes in this country, when you show that men can terrorise by assassination within a few miles of England? What has just happened in the Phœnix Park is exactly what might have occurred in the heart of Afghanistan

to English officers; it is almost too bad, I think, for one Afghan to have done to another. But I suppose you are all deafened by the roar of London talk. I think it stupefies our public men, and is thus bringing parliamentary government to paralysis of all organs but the tongue.

It is perhaps not surprising that this letter should have evoked from a warm admirer of Mr Gladstone, who was himself about to exchange literature for politics, a letter which the writer rightly describes as "vivacious."

May 31st, '82.

MY DEAR LYALL,—I don't wonder that you should be strongly moved at the hideous crime in the Phœnix Park. You may imagine what a blow it was to us on the spot, especially coming as it did in the moment of a sharp political crisis. Never shall I forget the shock of that terrible Sunday.

But I don't at all follow your moral about the "incapacity of the English people." Surely we are not the first society in the world that has found it easier said than done to deal with a jacquerie or with secret societies. You say we are disgraced in the eyes of Europe: does Russia find it so easy to put down Nihilists? Did Austria beat the Italian Carbonari?

I don't agree with you that the first duty of Governments is "to protect life"—if you mean that they are to think of nothing else at the same time. Such talk is merely in principle the talk of George III. and Lord North—"We must preserve the authority of the British Crown and Parliament; we won't parley with rebels; let them surrender, and then we'll see." No, said wise men like Burke, conciliate them. For my own part, like Chatham in that case, "I rejoice that Ireland has resisted." Our neglect has been infamous. The landlords have been as greedy and insolent a set of tyrants as ever ground the face of the poor in any country in the world. I hope that the hour of their destruction is now striking. In

the face of a great issue of this sort I am not going to turn pale and run away because one or two of the common atrocities of civil war (very few, indeed, mark you) are perpetrated. I am thoroughly glad that the French landlords were sent flying for their lives a hundred years ago, in spite of the bloodshed and injustice which marked the process.

"What sort of a lesson," you ask, "are we teaching the dangerous classes in India." You mean that we are to bully the Irish in order that you may bully the Indian. Well, that's not my notion of the fitness of things. I have no particular objection to your getting up Afghan wars and little trifles of that kind for the sake of overawing your dangerous classes, but I have the very liveliest objection in the world to making the dangerous classes in India the arbiters in the domestic struggles of our own country. If this is to be an argument, I shall at last throw in my lot, might and main, with the "Perish India" sect.

But now, look. I am as much for order—even temporary and provisional order—as you are. You never quite understood my hostility to the policy of coercion. . . . Yet the Government found out that I was right. The Coercion Bill has practically vanished, . . . and Lord Spencer is doing exactly what I said all along ought to be done, not locking up politicians by *lettre de cachet*, but thoroughly reorganising the police. That ought to have been done at first—mere bullying isn't governing, and it has failed.

Now, my dear Lyall, I am out of breath. Excuse me if I have been too vivacious. The truth is that I have fought this battle alone; and that produces certain tension in the mind, and makes one dreadfully pugnacious. But be sure that your heresies don't make me any the less than heretofore (in the style of an illustrious Earl of our acquaintance),

"Ever your very grateful and very affectionate,"

J. MORLEY.

If India does perish between now and the end of the year, come home and edit the 'Fortnightly,' which I am giving up.

But Lyall stuck to his point.

What I say is, that if you don't put down secret political assassination it will spread; and that is a reasonable saying, just as if I were writing of the cholera. You quote Burke upon America, I could reply over and over again from Burke upon France: anyhow I stick to my test that the business of the Government is to stop assassination in Ireland . . . your first duty, as a Government, is to stop it at all cost.

These letters are quoted to show a certain side of Lyall's character which was often unsuspected by those who did not know him well. His rather cynical, tolerant attitude in most matters—"what would I die for, and whom not spare?"—was coupled with a readiness for hard hitting in matters essential which would have made him a formidable ruler in time of trouble. He had shown it during the Mutiny as a young man, when he punished with discrimination, but with resolute severity; and, having seen much of him, I am certain that if at any time in after life he had again been called upon to deal with revolt or organised crime, he would have been more dangerous to evildoers than many men who talked vehemently and had a great reputation for decision of character.

In the first of these letters he showed at the same time how far he was from any tendency to depress or distrust the native of India, for he writes—

I have just appointed a native judge to the Allahabad High Court, the first who has ever been sent there. I want to push on the native wherever I can,—our only chance of placing Government here upon a broad and permanent basis.

He says the same thing to his sister, Mrs Webb—

I intend to push forward the native, quietly and judgmatically, all through my time. . . . What I want is time to acquire wide influence among the natives of the North-West Provinces, so as to carry them with me in anything I attempt.

This was, in truth, his policy throughout. He wanted to move carefully in so important a matter, and to make no mistakes; but his sympathy with the natives of India was exceptionally warm, and he was convinced that it was sound policy to associate them with us—the right classes of them—in the higher branches of the work of administration. He more than once spoke to me strongly from that point of view.[1]

[1] This did not necessarily imply a belief in representative institutions for India. From time immemorial the Hindu had been accustomed to regard it as natural and proper that there should be a governing class and a governed. This was the principle upon which the Mahomedan conquerors proceeded to rule; and when we took the place of the Moghuls we followed the main lines of their system. Akbar's policy,—a liberal and wise policy,—was to associate the leaders of the Hindus with the Mahomedan Empire; to make the Hindu of the governing class feel he was Civis Romanus, and so to widen the base of the Imperial power. Similarly, the more thoughtful of British officials wished to associate Indians of position and influence, Hindus and Mahomedans alike, with the British Empire. But the introduction of representative government, of the democratic principle, is a different matter—a radical interference with the ancient institutions of the country. It remains to be seen whether the attempt to impose such an essentially Western system upon an Eastern population will prove successful. It is a pouring of new wine into old bottles, and it is by no means a proof of sympathy with Indian feeling, rather the contrary. The two things should not be confused. We may be right in trying to create a democratic feeling in India, but that has nothing to do with the question of giving to Indians a larger share in the government of the empire.

In this year, 1882, appeared the first volume of his 'Asiatic Studies.' He had been in communication with Morley about this work, which consisted largely of papers published in the 'Fortnightly'; and when, just at this time, Morley's connection with that review came to an end, Lyall apprehended that the publication of his book might be stopped. He was not inclined to trouble himself on the subject, as he felt that he could make a better book five years later; and he was always reluctant rather than impatient to publish his work. He wished to put forth nothing but his best. At this moment, for example, his sister had sent to the 'Cornhill,' with his name attached, one of his poems. He was much disturbed at this, regarding the piece as "some scrambling verses," and as he had always kept in mind an early warning of Morley's against letting his name appear too often, he withdrew the piece by telegram.

Meanwhile, his private collection of 'Verses Written in India' had proved a remarkable success in England. He had given some thirty copies of the verses to friends, and many people were asking for them. It was suggested to him that he should publish them, but he refused. "I will not publish just yet," he wrote to his sister, "there are not enough; I will wait five years on the chance of some fresh inspiration, though I feel very dried up." And he more than once expresses surprise at so many people liking them. As a matter of fact, when he did publish, he had not added much.

A little later, June the 2nd, 1882, he writes—

No use my saying anything more about the murders; the papers brought us the ghastly details yesterday. What strikes me is the predominance, in the tone in which most of the papers and meetings discuss the event, of the softer virtues, sympathy, grief, horror, and compassion. I should like a little more fierceness and honest brutality in the national temperament. I am afraid that when the present excitement has cooled down the stringent measures now passed will be relaxed in practice, and we shall have Gladstone again explaining that the qualities of real statesmanship are patience, long-suffering, and consideration for the oppressed. . . . The point is to stop organised murdering, and that was never done anywhere in the world except by unfettered, well-directed force. The whole thing is a question of police, and the power of the police and of the law must be adapted to the strength and savagery of the offenders. When we had to put down Thugs, a secret strangling society in India, we did not begin by improving the condition of the peasantry, although undoubtedly the crime had been largely generated out of the general confusion and misgovernment of the country. We took our own measures for discovering who belonged to the murdering society, and we soon broke it up. . . . I would I were at home, instead of going a dull round of provincial work on this hill.

The Irish question had settled upon his mind and troubled him greatly, leading him to take rather a dark view of the future.

On the whole [he writes], . . . the survey of England from this distance impresses one with gloomy forebodings, not of immediate but of gradual decadence; owing to a great concentration of wealth and luxury among certain classes, producing a general indifference, relaxation of fibre, and carelessness of what goes on in the outlying parts of the empire.

. . . I doubt if "society" would much care if India were lost, so long as their Indian dividends were secured.

I won't write more about Ireland or Egypt. The Lord deliver us, in any way that may seem fit, from W. E. G., who is evidently a helpless and futile man in rough times. He is the sort of person who brings us, eventually, the Saviours of Society, Cromwells and Napoleons, by whom he is contemptuously hurled aside and stigmatised as "ideologue."

Before the end of his first summer in Naini Tal, Lyall was becoming reconciled to his lot. He spent much time in wandering about the hillsides, enjoying the scenery; and the independence of his post had begun to appeal to him. He felt at times the isolation of it, for, in this province, a Lieutenant-Governor is rather cut off from general society; and he felt also the loss of the more exciting work of the Foreign Office; but still he was not unhappy, except for "diabolical headaches," and for what haunted him during the latter part of his Indian career — the dread of a dull and narrow life after retirement. As the day approached when he would leave India, that dread grew on him more and more.

After the close of the Afghan war Lord Ripon had been able to devote himself to internal reforms; and he seemed inclined to adopt as forward a policy in this respect as Lord Lytton had adopted in foreign affairs. It has been shown that Lyall wished to push forward the native of India. But none the less he wished to move carefully, and in the right direction. Much as he liked and sympathised with Lord Ripon, he knew that reforms in India, if injudiciously pressed,

might be as dangerous as Afghan wars, or more so. His letters show that at times he thought the Government was going too fast.

I am driving my own coach cautiously, and trying to prevent the Government of India from driving me. . . . W. W. Hunter has been stumping the country about education—a subject I am willing to let him have, as I have no belief in it in Indian politics except as likely to add to our eventual difficulties; but as education is a thing that can't be refused, and that I would not if I could refuse, to the native, I don't mind its ultimate effects. Hunter has a wonderful talent for dressing up a subject artistically, trotting it out, and generally making the most of it, as of a horse for sale.

The conflict in Egypt—a conflict he had foreseen—was now coming on; and one of his letters of this time has a remark which was characteristic of him. With all his hatred of bloodshed he had no doubts as to the power of the sword, and he writes—

I am constantly irritated by the new-fashioned historians and philosophers (including H. Spencer), who talk with contempt of histories that record battles. They are really and truly the most important events in the world's annals, however you look at them.

So he watched with keen interest General Wolseley's movements against Arabi Pasha. Yet it is worth noting that he had now contracted as strong a dislike to Carlyle, the apostle of force, as he had to Gladstone, who thought force no remedy, and to historical theorists.

Some day our time will come again to be murdered in India, and then if we don't hit out savagely, as we did in

1857, we are lost. Carlyle I can't stand, he was a poet in prose; but his scorn of better men than himself is intolerable.

Towards the end of the summer Lord Ripon invited Lyall to pay him a visit in Simla, in order to discuss various questions of interest, and in September he found himself among the old familiar scenes and friends—Charles Grant, who had taken his place as Foreign Secretary, Evelyn Baring, now Financial Member of Council, "Bill Beresford,[1] comically respectful," and others. He spent a pleasant week there, and returned quite satisfied with his lot in life.

I don't find myself in the least wishing myself back in the place; the whole whirligig of Secretaries and Council members, with boxes and red chuprassees, looks to me rather spectral, . . . and Simla itself has, after Naini Tal, a suburban and shoppy aspect. The woods and crags and lake of my petty capital are much more to my mind, so rapidly does one get to like what one has accepted.

He was made the happier by the news of Wolseley's victory at Tel-el-Kebir, which arrived during his stay at Simla; and by the information that his youngest son Robert, aged six, had been led away by the native servants at Naini Tal

to proclaim himself Lord Sahib in my absence, and insists upon being so addressed; this is so purely Eastern, the son rebelling while his father is on a distant expedition.

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[1] Lord William Beresford, V.C., Aide-de-Camp, and afterwards Military Secretary, a singularly capable man, and the best of friends.

Before the end of the month he was back at Naini Tal, where he received from his sister Barbara a letter informing him that she had been dining with the Poet Laureate, Tennyson, who had spoken well of his verses "East and West." Lyall was no doubt pleased at this appreciation, but not unduly elated: "they look well enough in print," he writes, "and are up to the level of a magazine, not beyond. I could write more of that class, but I am always seeking to strike a deeper note."

The victory at Tel-el-Kebir pleased him, for he felt that much depended on it, in India as elsewhere; but he was not happy about the Egyptian situation in general, for he foresaw that with such interests as we had in Egypt it would be difficult to get out again, and that we should be forced to leave a strong body of troops in the country.

I hope people see now the wisdom of not having locked up 12,000 men in Kandahar by determining to hold that country — with Ireland, Egypt, and Afghanistan to keep down, we should have been in a precarious condition as to troops for our empire in any emergency.

In India things were then going quietly—foreign affairs were asleep, and the authorities were occupied with Lord Ripon's scheme of Local Self-Government. As to this, Lyall wrote: "I think the general idea, if moderately developed, is good enough, but it is all experimental." There is at that time no sign in his letters that he apprehended any trouble about the famous "Ilbert Bill," which was soon to

cause such an explosion in Bengal. He enjoyed a pleasant march in the "hills" with some friends, revelling in what is perhaps the most glorious mountain scenery in the world, and then came down to Lucknow, the capital of his province of Oudh, where he was shortly to receive a visit from Lord Ripon. At Lucknow he felt himself thoroughly at home.

I like the old familiar up-country life of rising early, taking long rides, and seeing all sorts and conditions of natives, it suits me far better than toiling at the Secretariat oar; I feel more in the real *milieu* of India, and can rely better on grasping the actual facts and sentiments around me. I am convinced that the people are wonderfully easy to manage if one only takes trouble.

It had been a pleasure to see Lyall during his visit to Simla, and I saw him again at Lucknow, where I was staying in the Viceroy's camp, within a few minutes' canter. He had given me a standing invitation to meals, so I was frequently in the house, and had some interesting talks with him. One of those talks I remember very well, and as it has some bearing on his character I will mention it. After dinner one night, when the party broke up, he asked me to come and smoke a cigarette with him in his study. We sat down, and he began by asking me whether the new Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab, Sir Charles Aitchison, was popular in his province. The two men, Aitchison and Lyall, were very dissimilar, and had never been on intimate terms. I answered that I did not think Aitchison was as popular as he deserved to be—among Europeans,—that his officers had not yet got

to understand him. Lyall smiled and said: "I thought so. But a Lieutenant-Governor is never popular. I am not popular." He went on to put the point plainly. "Tell me," he said; "you need not be afraid of hurting my feelings. You must have heard what people say. Isn't it the case?" As a fact I had received, with great regret, some rather unfavourable answers to my remarks about him; and thinking that perhaps I could help him by telling him the exact truth, I answered: "Well, as you ask me, I don't think that among Europeans you are popular." "Why is it? What do you think is the reason? I should like to know." "They say you are suspicious, that you don't trust your men, and let them see that you don't trust them." He seemed taken aback, and said: "Suspicious? I am not suspicious really, but . . ." then he stopped and thought, and broke into one of his silent laughs. "Yes," he said, "they are quite right. I am suspicious —*damned* suspicious." I protested, as I had protested before when people had said so, for to me he had always been the most trusting and pleasant of chiefs; but he would not have it. He was particularly friendly, and thanked me for telling him the truth, which he said he would bear in mind. I went away that night rather unhappy, fearing I had hurt him, and perhaps seemed ungrateful; but he never showed the smallest resentment, and throughout the rest of our visit was as cordial as a man could be.

On this subject it may be as well to quote a passage from one of his letters. He says—

F. H.'s remark about my being "suspicious" is curious, because true, though I did not know I showed it in the way he mentions. I feel myself constantly suspecting that officers are shirking their work, and my eye is almost too quick in detecting little tricks played to mislead me in minor matters of business, but I didn't know I *greeted* people suspiciously when they bid me good-day. However, it's good to know.

Another letter, written a little later, has the following—

An article in a paper said I was suspicious. So I fear I am; but something must be attributed to the uncontrollable way in which my eyes express every thought passing my brain. I can feel that.

All this has been written from the wish to show Lyall fairly, as he was or appeared to others; but I repeat that I never served under a man who treated me with a more generous confidence; and I believe that his so-called suspiciousness was more manner than anything else. He talked to me at various times very freely about other men; and he was certainly not uncharitable in his judgments, but exceptionally tolerant and fair, even to men whom he did not like.[1]

Before the end of the year Lyall received copies of his volume of 'Asiatic Studies,' with a "kindly but magisterial letter" from the Editor of 'The Edin-

[1] Perhaps he was not quite fair at times to men of what he used to call the "Plain John Lawrence" school—men who, he thought, affected to be ruggedly honest and democratic in their ways. They always irritated him. With some of them there was in reality no affectation whatever. Charles Aitchison and Charles Bernard, for example, both shrewd and able men, were by nature very simple and unassuming. To Lyall it always seemed more or less a pose, and undignified.

burgh Review,' for omitting to acknowledge in his preface that one of the chapters was taken from an 'Edinburgh' article. Lyall had asked permission, but had forgotten to mention it, and he now apologised humbly, "pleading youth and inexperience as an author." The book was very well received, and, contrary to his expectation, sold in a satisfactory way. His verses, too, were much in request, and one of his sisters wrote to tell him so. He answered in his usual tone—

As for your being asked for my poems, do you not seriously think that it is a fine position to have a mysterious reputation for having written something good, and to be saved from the risk of the illusion being dissipated when the verses are published in the fiercer light of day? I am certain that only two or three short pieces are worth reproducing.

In after years Lyall was decidedly opposed to the women's suffrage movement. His letters show that thirty years ago, and more, he often thought over the question. Some letters of his on the subject have already been quoted. It was always a matter of deep regret with him to see what he called the waste of the finest race of women in the world, due to the fall of the marriage rate in England; and at first he was inclined to take the view that if men could not solve that problem in the proper way they must let the malcontent women try their experiments. He felt very keenly for the lot of the widows. About one of his friends he writes—

The Lady of Shalott is the mystic type of such forlorn ladies, who live down in some quiet country spot, thinking

of the days that are no more, as they look over the autumn fields.

But still marriage, he felt, was the real remedy for women's discontent.

In short, if you give women something to do, or even something to look back upon, I doubt their caring for "rights." If you give them nothing to live for, they will rush for politics or anything, just as men would, and will probably play the devil. This being the case [he concludes, with the gentle cynicism which some people took quite seriously], one appreciates the deep philosophy of marrying off all the girls, and then burning all the widows, as they used to do in India before we upset the time-honoured institutions of a thoughtful and far-seeing people.

Madame Blavatsky and her friends were at that time trying to spread the tenets of Theosophy in India. It need hardly be said that attempts were made to convert to the creed a man who was known to have such a strong interest in Hindu philosophy, and generally in the workings of the Eastern mind; but Lyall's unfailing sense of humour made such attempts utterly hopeless.

His views on the subject are shown by the words he puts into the mouth of Vamadeo Shastri—

I attach no importance to such vagaries as those of the Theosophists; though you will have noticed how a slight dabbling in the occult practices of Indian yogis has turned a few honest English proselytes into poor demented gentlemen.

The antics of Madame Blavatsky and her circle were not much more distasteful to him than the

well-meaning but rather spectacular methods of the Salvation Army. He believed that a want of outward religion appealed in some measure to the more educated and thoughtful Hindu, but that the proceedings of the Salvation Army tended only to lower our reputation for refinement of religious thought.

Sir Mountstuart Grant Duff had then taken over the Government of Madras. Lyall always liked him, but was amused by some of his performances.

Granty [he writes] has made himself very comfortable with a French cook and all the newest publications, and retails a large supply of anecdotes and *bon mots* to the Madras public. He is sometimes over their heads, sometimes below their moral standard—as when he shocked society in an after-dinner speech by saying, "And now, as Lady Godiva said at the end of her ride, I approach my close (clothes)." Official society in India is prudish.

That last remark is one which may strike English readers of Rudyard Kipling as curious; but it is curiously true.

After much correspondence between Lyall and Lord Ripon the Local Self-Government Scheme for the North-West Provinces had been worked out, and a few days before the close of the year Lyall writes—

I have brought out a big Resolution on Local Self-Government; I daresay it will be a good deal criticised, but all I want is to be let alone. The whole machinery of Government in India is revolving faster and faster; and this is entirely because the big wheel which moves all the others —the Viceroy and his Council—is increasing its speed,—all the little wheels rush round with multiplied velocity, and

the country passively submits to be worked upon. The more I get down again to the bottom of things,—nearer, as it were, to the tail of the actual plough,—the more I see that the big Government people can only guess faintly and vaguely what will be the effect of their measures, and what all these vast masses of people think about it all. One thing is sure: the natives all discuss our rule still, as a transitory state of existence, a huge structure that may vanish any day, inexplicably, as it appeared. I fancy that the Hindu philosophy, which teaches that everything we see or feel is a vast cosmic illusion, projected into space by that which is the manifestation of the infinite and unconscious spirit, has an unsettling effect on their political beliefs; but of course they are otherwise right, and it is true that our empire has many elements of great instability.

It was one of Lyall's strongest points that in all such questions he tried earnestly to get at native opinion; by which I do not mean merely or mainly the views enunciated by the native press, or even the views put forward, on inquiry, by native officials, but the opinion of the Indian people—of all classes. He was never a good linguist in the sense of speaking with a good accent or intonation—he had not a good ear for languages—but his long service in country districts had given him a very good knowledge of the vocabulary, and of native methods of thought and speech. He understood better than most Englishman what a native of India meant to say even when the meaning was put, as it often is, in guarded language. And even when he was hard pressed with the work of the Foreign Office, he would spend hours of valuable time in long conversations with all sorts and conditions of men, not

only with the chiefs and officials whom it was his business to see, but with traders and yeomen and peasants. It was not merely that he was courteous and patient—many men are that—but he was really interested, and felt that this was one of the most important and pleasant parts of his work. The knowledge that the office-boxes were accumulating —boxes full of work that must be done—did not seem to fill him with the sense of despair which sometimes comes upon an overdriven secretary when a visitor to whom time is nothing goes on talking round and round, without coming to the point. He was always working to get into touch with the real India, the India that is hidden from so many eyes, and the boxes did not trouble him. It is said that Englishmen in India, year by year more heavily loaded with paper work, know less of native thought than they used to do. Certainly, as far as an Englishman could know it, he knew it well; and it was that which gave to his views upon all Indian questions so much weight and value.

Lyall spent a quiet Christmas at Allahabad. He had as guests one or two people he really liked, among them Lady St John, wife of Sir Oliver St John of the Indian political service; and though rather isolated in his "Government House" from the residents about him, he was for the time contented enough. Fitzjames Stephen and Lord Lytton, who had read his volume of Studies, both urged him to write a comprehensive book on India, but he feared he had not the power to do so. His writings, he

said, were too minutely thought out and composed for a long flight. Still the estimate in which his book was held pleased him; and in other respects all was going well.

Early in the following year, 1883, he was in camp inspecting some of his many districts and receiving addresses from various municipalities about the new scheme of Local Self-Government, which the people of the North-West Provinces took very quietly. He describes their attitude in a letter to Mrs Holland—

> The natives are eminently conservative, otherwise good-natured, and quite willing to fall in with the whims of their incomprehensible rulers; the 44 millions of the North-West Provinces and Oudh are the most easily governed masses in this world, if you don't touch their worship and don't tax them grievously.

And these were the very provinces over which, twenty-five years before, the great storm of the Mutiny had raged as it raged nowhere else. No doubt Lyall was right in his view, and the docility of the people was natural, not due in any appreciable measure to the punishment inflicted during the revolt;[1] but it gives one an uneasy sensation when one reflects how easily such a population was stirred to such a convulsive outbreak. Nevertheless it should always be remembered that, even here, except in the recently annexed province of Oudh, the bulk of the population rose against each other, not against the Government.

The Calcutta season of 1882-3 witnessed the extra-

[1] In the course of the Mutiny the leaders of disaffection were, no doubt, to some extent weeded out.

ordinary explosion of race feeling which was brought about by the so-called "Ilbert Bill," a measure which gave to native magistrates in certain circumstances jurisdiction over Europeans. Now that passions have cooled down on both sides it is pretty generally recognised that the root-principle of the measure was sound enough, but that the Bill was in no way necessary, that it was introduced under conditions which tended to provoke resentment, and that even in the substance of the Bill some mistakes were made.

The introduction of such measures in a country like India is a delicate business, and requires very judicious handling. Nothing can be more unfortunate than any action, however harmless in itself, which tends to set colour against colour. Lyall's view, when consulted in 1882, was that any native of India who was made magistrate of a district should have the jurisdiction, on administrative grounds; and this was perhaps the general opinion of English officials in India. His reasons for this view are clearly stated in a letter written some time afterwards to the present Lord Cromer, who was then the Financial Member of the Viceroy's Council—

> District magistrates form a class permanently limited in number; they have serious executive responsibility over definite areas; they command large staffs; they are really and truly the mainspring of the whole administration,—the most important officers in the executive service of the country. To such a man you should give all the attributes of power, and to make a native a district magistrate, and then to weaken him by telling him he must not touch a European, is

unwise and inconsistent. He is responsible for keeping order in his district, and he ought to be able to deal with all sorts and conditions of men.

This was sound sense; and if the Government of India had quietly added district magistrates to the list of those having jurisdiction, no objection would, in all probability, have been raised by any one. Unfortunately the Bill gave power to other magistrates who had no such standing or responsibility as the magistrates of districts, and it was introduced at an unlucky moment. The English in India, very few in number, not one in a thousand of the population, must always be sensitive as to any encroachment on their rights and safeguards. They had already been excited by the discussion about Local Self-Government, which some of them thought a foolish and dangerous measure, and by an unfortunate attempt to reserve the Rurki Engineering College for persons of "pure Asiatic descent." Now came a measure which was represented as placing unofficial Englishmen in isolated districts, and their wives and children, at the mercy of natives.[1]

[1] It is a mistake to suppose that this was a mere pretence. Behar, for example, a part of the Bengal province, was dotted with indigo factories, where the planters and their families lived for the most part in absolute isolation, with no neighbours or police at hand to help them in case of trouble. Moreover, by the nature of their business, they were liable to be involved in land litigation, and the first move in such cases was frequently the trumping up of a false charge in a criminal court—a method of warfare which had been brought to the level of a fine art. The tea-planters of Eastern Bengal were not very differently situated. It is not altogether surprising that people in such circumstances should have been really alarmed and angry at the idea of being deprived of their right to be tried by an English magistrate, or that the non-official community in Calcutta should have sympathised with them. Many district officers in Bengal did the same.

The result was that the unofficial community, led by the barristers and merchants of Calcutta, broke out into passionate opposition. Then followed a state of things which was most deplorable, and might have led to the gravest trouble. The Europeans denounced the Viceroy and all his doings, while the natives of Bengal were enthusiastic in his favour, and allowed their enthusiasm to carry them away into outrageous press attacks upon Englishmen in general. A state of antagonism was set up between white men and black such as had not been known since the Mutiny.

At this juncture Lord Ripon's Private Secretary, Henry Primrose,[1] fell ill with typhoid fever, and Lord Ripon asked me to take over charge of his duties. It was a curious and painful time, for though Lord Ripon was always brave and steady, he felt, as any man must have felt, the storm of obloquy directed against him. I could hear from my room at Government House, and so could he, the shouts of applause and wrath at the Town Hall close by, where his opponents were denouncing him; and the language used by the Calcutta press was violent to the last degree. However, the matter ended for a time by his undertaking to refer the Bill for the opinion of the local governments throughout India; and at the beginning of the hot weather, when he went away to Simla, the agitation died down.

Lyall summed up the situation as follows :—

In this instance, and still more in the question of Local Self-Government, I think the policy sound; but it has been

[1] Now Sir Henry Primrose, K.C.B.

badly handled. . . . Lord Ripon's idea of signalising his Viceroyalty by inaugurating certain liberal reforms, and by taking one or two decided steps forward, was good; but India is being stirred up by all these controversies, and government will not hereafter be so simple a matter as it has been hitherto.

The Bill had at one time led to some slight misunderstanding between Lyall and Lord Ripon, who thought Lyall had not stood by him with sufficient firmness; and I had the disagreeable duty of explaining Lord Ripon's views to Lyall personally. The fact was that when the Bill was first mooted the local administrators consulted looked upon it from the purely administrative point of view explained above, and did not perceive how dangerous it might seem to the non-official.

I am afraid [Lyall wrote] we did not give much attention to the matter, being, most of us, not much in the current of non-official European opinion, and leaving the question of policy to the Government of India. I am now very sorry that we were not more circumspect.

When non-official opinion broke out passionately against the Bill, and race feeling was roused, the officials ranged themselves in an almost unanimous body on the side of the non-officials. It was one thing to give the jurisdiction freely; it was another thing to give it when the concession meant the triumph of the Bengali over the European. I had occasion to write to Lord Ripon about the matter in April 1883, and I see that I told him that officials as well as non-officials were "dead against the Bill." It was an unfortunate affair altogether. Lord Ripon and

some of those about him were perhaps too eager to show their sympathy for the native, without much regard for the feelings of the British community. On the other hand the non-official English, not accustomed to trust the natives as the officials were, exaggerated the practical importance of the particular measure, and some of them proceeded to behave in a way that was quite indefensible.

In Lyall's province nobody wanted the Bill. The Europeans, though moderate, were opposed to it, and the great mass of the natives thought it not in the least worth all the stir and bad blood it had caused. That stir and bad blood was mainly, if not entirely, in Lower Bengal, where the circumstances were peculiar; but Lower Bengal was an important province, and what happened there attracted attention all over India. Lyall maintained his usual guarded attitude. He writes, "I have intrenched myself behind cautious proposals, and am quoted by both sides." That may seem at first sight a not very heroic policy, savouring of the trimmer. But in his case it was a consistent policy. He had been in favour of the principle of the Bill, but not in favour of the hasty extension of that principle, or of the rather spectacular and provocative manner in which the Bill had been introduced. He disliked "setting fire to an important wing of the house to roast a healthy but small pig." The matter unfortunately did not end with the return of Lord Ripon to Simla. In the spring of 1883 Lyall comments upon the increasing complication of the business of ruling India, and points out how Lords

Northbrook, Lytton, and Ripon had all made bad mistakes—

However, we must all do our best to pull the Viceroy through, but I rather dread the isolation of the mountain-top, it is difficult to deal properly with any big questions when one is thus secluded from all but officials. I think we might not have gone so readily for the Native Jurisdiction Bill if we had been down among people in the plains when our opinion was asked last year.

He was peculiarly isolated, for his fine house at Naini Tal, perched on a hill some 1200 feet above the lake, cut him off very much from even the official society about him, and made him speak evil of Sir John Strachey, a former Lieutenant-Governor, who had built it there. A little later, during the summer, he writes—

The tone of the native press grows more vicious and insulting, in Bengal, daily. I am constantly speculating as to how far it can possibly be despised as impotent and absurd; a perpetual stream of mendacity and abuse, among ignorant people eaten up with self-conceit, may end by leavening the mass to a greater degree than we now fancy.

And there can be no doubt now that he was right in his apprehension. He felt, too, that Viceroys were at times to blame for stirring up dangerous ideas. The next, he said,

will begin, as they all do, by fancying that the one thing needful and easy is to conciliate the natives, and he will soon find out the risks of bidding for native popularity and stimulating native ambition. Nothing looks so simple, at the beginning, as dealing with Asiatics, and nothing requires longer experience.

That was the opinion of a man who was more in touch with the natives of India than almost any Englishman of his time,—whose constant desire was to advance their interests, and associate them with us in the government of the country. But he wanted to enlist the help of the well-meaning majority, and knew the danger of playing into the hands of the noisy and seditious few. His sympathy was of the right kind, sympathy born of knowledge and guided by knowledge. There are many Englishmen in India, at all times, who have it. Good feeling and sympathy are not confined to Englishmen who stay in England. If the nation would only understand this, we should be saved many difficulties, not only in India, but in other parts of the world.

At the beginning of the cold weather of 1883-4 the British in Calcutta were as deeply incensed against Lord Ripon as ever, and Lyall felt much for him—

It is the most unlucky business that ever a Viceroy got entangled in. . . . I am sincerely sorry and troubled at Lord Ripon's ill-luck.

A little later—

H.E. was very cool and plucky while here, and showed considerable gameness; though, of course, he knew a disagreeable reception awaited him in Calcutta. I was touched by his generous self-command: he might have shown some umbrage at the rather lukewarm support he got from me. I have since written a letter in strong support of his determination to carry through a modified measure, and not to withdraw the Bill.

The end of the matter was that during the cold weather a modified measure was passed, and the controversy was at last closed. To quote Lyall's words, the Bill was "solemnly interred under a farcical compromise which will do mischief some day." But it was interred. Lyall regarded it as a "blundering and unnecessary measure," and mourned over the trouble it had brought upon Lord Ripon; so he was thankful when it was out of the way, and the open strife between Briton and Babu in Lower Bengal was finally covered up.

Meanwhile Lyall was once more occupying himself with literature. He had been pleased at the reception of his 'Asiatic Studies.'

> I wish [he says] I could write more; but I am so desperately critical of my own writing, and find myself taking more and more time to say exactly, to a hair, what I want to say, that I get on slowly. . . . I am secretly wondering that the book should be so praised.

A letter of June 1883 is interesting as showing the genesis of his poem "Retrospection." People have asked whether this was based on any real incident of the Mutiny. It was not. Lyall writes of it as "a mere exercise in verse," and had evidently altered it from a first version on different lines, or a prose story. He says: "The notion was suggested by my visit to Bulandshahr, and by looking at the trees under which we had lain in some peril twenty-five years ago." Lord Lytton much approved of the poem; but Tennyson said "the story is ghastly"; which word, Lyall writes, "rather sinks into my brain,

like David's pebble, by reason of its force and truth." A little later he sent to his sister an additional stanza. It is now printed as the last but one—"a shout, a volley, a rushing ride." The poem was not altogether a success in England, partly because the story was ghastly, and partly because people could not make out who fired the shot—which, as he said, was a hopeless state of things.

It is remarkable that most men ask, "But who fired the shot?" and that all women scream out in reply, "Why, the man himself, you goose." It shows, what I have always said, the superior capacity for romantic wickedness preserved, in spite of all civilisation, by the women. The greater number of men couldn't do anything violently sinful, in any emergency—almost all the women could work themselves up to the crisis, like dear Lady Macbeth.

At this time Lyall was meditating an article in 'The Edinburgh Review' on the Life of Mountstuart Elphinstone, which the Editor had sent to him. He thought that this was much better than Bosworth Smith's Life of Lord Lawrence, which he characterised as

not a high-class work, . . . almost all Indian biographies are over-coloured and out of proportion to the real merits of the subject. But the 'Edinburgh' don't suit me as the old 'Fortnightly' did. I am trying to write in the respectable semitone of quarterlies, whereas the irreverent 'Fortnightly' was better suited to my ideas.

The article was accepted by the Editor with very complimentary remarks, and appeared in the number for January 1884.

In the autumn of 1883 there was some renewal of excitement about Russian moves in Central Asia, and Lyall heard that there was a talk in certain circles about forestalling the Russians by an advance to Kandahar, or even Herat. He was inclined to scoff.

> But the great thing is to keep cool, and to let the Russians enter Afghanistan first, if they are coming, in order that they may be the invaders, and that the Afghans may be turned against them. I don't believe in the Afghans joining them in an attack upon India; the Afghan loves his liberty above all, and is quite sharp enough to see that if the Russians defeat us on the Indus they will and must convert the country in their rear into a Russian province.

Some years later the Amir Abdurrahman used the same words to me in Kabul.

In December Lyall sends his sister another copy of "East and West." He criticises it, and suggests, as one obstacle to publishing all his verses, "that my later style is becoming different from (not better than) my earlier." Shortly afterwards he writes—

> I won't publish just yet. I want to write some more, and to publish once for all a small volume which will just give the faint brief note that I can strike amid the clanging tones of the world's singing.

Some time before the close of the year Lyall had heard that the first edition of his 'Asiatic Studies' was exhausted, and that a second was being issued; also that a Breton gentleman, Mr René de Kerallain, had offered to translate the book into French. This was the beginning of a literary acquaintance which gave

Lyall much pleasure, and led to a very interesting exchange of letters. Some of them will be found in the later part of this volume. The translation of the Studies was duly carried out, and with remarkable success.

After Lyall's paper on Elphinstone had appeared in the 'Edinburgh,' he was pressed by the Editor to write more articles, but, as he said, he was not one of those who were able to turn on the literary steam when he pleased.

The "cold weather" was spent, as usual, largely in camp, marching about the districts; and among Lyall's guests this year were the Duke and Duchess of Connaught. The Duke had come out to command the Meerut Division, which was in Lyall's province. He enjoyed also a visit from his old friend Sir Frederick Roberts, and one from Baron Hübner, the Austrian diplomatist, "who knows everybody and everything." Finally, he had with him for a time Mr and Lady Anne Blunt. Lyall had small sympathy with Wilfrid Blunt's ideas about Islam, but he found much pleasure in the contact with a mind of such capacity and culture.

He was deeply interested at this time in learning that his views regarding an understanding with Russia were bearing fruit.

I see signs [he wrote] that the Foreign Offices of India and England have come round to the view which originated with me in 1881, when I strenuously recommended that instead of working against Russia in Central Asia, we should propose to demarcate by formal treaty the boundaries of

Afghanistan, the treaty to be not with the Afghans, but with the Russians. This view is put in my 'Edinburgh' article.

As a matter of fact the policy was on the point of being accepted and put into practice, for Colonel Ridgeway[1] and I were then in the Indian Foreign Office, and during the winter we had both arrived at the conclusion that an arrangement with Russia offered the best prospect of coming to a satisfactory settlement of the Afghan question. My own opinion in the matter was largely coloured by Lyall's systematic advocacy of this course of action; and so perhaps was the opinion of Lord Ripon, who accepted generally the views put forward by Colonel Ridgeway and supported by me. The result was the Afghan Boundary Commission of 1884-1886, which though it passed through some troublous times, and very nearly ended in war with Russia, eventually led to an agreement, and paved the way for a general understanding. The real difficulty at this time, and later, indeed until the Japanese war, was not that the Government of India was averse from an understanding with Russia, but that the Russians, firmly believing "the twentieth century was theirs," were reluctant to tie their hands by any comprehensive engagements with us. And this was natural enough. Lyall had some right to claim that the new policy originated with him, and he always did so. I find among his later papers the proposal to which

[1] Afterwards the Right Hon. Sir West Ridgeway, G.C.B., G.C.M.G., K.C.S.I.

he refers. It is in an envelope which bears the following docket in his handwriting—

Note of 1881 in regard to a treaty with Russia on the subject of the Afghan north-western boundary. This contains the original suggestion upon which the boundary was afterwards formally demarcated, and it also foreshadowed the policy of an agreement with Russia in Asiatic affairs. Lord Morley reprinted in (it?) in 1906 for the negotiations with Russia.

In the spring of 1884, before going up to the hills, Lyall was in Lucknow, trying to work out his poem "The Amir's Message."

But I can't write the metre I want, to my own satisfaction. Take this line from the old black-letter version of "Chevy Chase"—

> "The Persé out of Northumberland, and a vow to God made he,"—

it has a rough roll and dash that isn't easy to reproduce, to my ear. However, I will send you what I can make; and luckily few people are metricists, or have a jealous ear for verse in the way people have for music.

The result was a poem beginning with the line—

> "Abdurrahmán, the Duráni Khán, to the Ghilzaie chief wrote he," . . .

A later letter refers to this—

I wrote off, very rapidly, a day back, my verses about "The Amir's Message"; and now I have to tone it down, and to give it a quieter colour. Flaubert's Letters to Georges Sand are interesting; he was an artist who sat for hours searching for the word which gave the precise effect he wanted, just what I am always inclined to do."

Wilfrid Blunt, whose judgment on poetical matters Lyall thought excellent, probably had some influence on Lyall's methods of versification. I do not know whether he saw this particular poem, but Lyall's letter quoted above mentions Blunt's views on Lindsay Gordon's "Rhyme of the Joyous Garde," and "The Amir's Message" may have been seen by him at the same time.

Shortly before this the Russians had taken Merv —"last home of the free-lance,"—and Lyall's letter is very Lyallesque — half literature, half practical politics. It goes on—

> The debate over Merv was not bad, and Lord Lytton's speech very good, though his own policy would not have prevented what has occurred. No tinkering at Afghanistan or Persia will stop the forward movement of the Russians; the steel head of their advance-guard will pierce those loose and weak states like a wedge driven into soft wood; and if we ally ourselves with such states against the only real power in Central Asia, we shall be only encumbered, probably betrayed, at the moment for action.

To which, however, it might have been answered, and was answered, "But if Russia will not come to terms, or, having come to terms, will not keep faith?" Lyall would doubtless have replied, "Then fight, but do not depend on such allies." "Non tali auxilio nec defensoribus istis." We have tried his plan now, at a considerable sacrifice, and all of us must hope that it will succeed.

Lyall was greatly troubled in mind at this time by our entanglement in Egypt and the Soudan. He felt

not only that it weakened our position with regard to Russia, but that we were undertaking responsibilities from which we should find it very difficult to withdraw; and his letter ends with the words, "I fear Gordon will fail in the Soudan; no one can act without an army."

In April 1884 he was staying at Dera, a pretty little place "betwixt mountain and plain," with a small bachelor party consisting of his excellent Private Secretary, Holmes, his Aide-de-Camp, Rose of the 10th Hussars, and Hercules Ross of the Civil Service, a famous sportsman. He was evidently enjoying himself, and was pressing his sister Barbara to come out to India again.

> This is probably by far the best bit of my life. I have just done two years of it, and thereafter I shall slide down hill, so make up your mind to see me at my best, . . . life never waits; it flashes by and changes like a kaleidoscope.

From Dera he sent to her his "Amir's Message," with which as usual he was not satisfied. The verses, he wrote,

> are rather in the old Byronic style, and they want the delicate finish that is the note of good modern work; but I comfort myself with the idea that the Londoners couldn't have written them with the true local colouring.

This is in reality one of the chief merits of Lyall's poetical work. Possibly he underestimated his own delicacy of finish as compared with that of most other writers of the day; but it is the accuracy and warmth of his local colour, perhaps more than anything

else, which give to his Indian verses their special value.

Soon afterwards he was again in his mountain home at Naini Tal, rather depressed by the prospect of another five months in a place where he had few companions and no outside visitors. But he was writing for the 'Edinburgh,' and, as usual, reading everything he could get on literary subjects.

He was much vexed at this time by an attack made upon him by an Indian newspaper. The incident is of no importance now, and was perhaps of no great importance then, but it shows what Lyall's views were in such matters.

> Lord Ripon tried to persuade me [he wrote] that lies are beneath notice. My answer was that, in public as in private life, when one falsehood has been unanswerably exposed, subsequent assertions by the same person are greatly discredited. . . . I believe that one gains in the long-run by hitting back whenever one is attacked.

Lyall was doubtless right in this view. As Lord Dufferin once put it, "No public man can afford to let falsehoods about him go without contradiction."

Lyall was still working over his Local Self-Government Scheme for the North-West Provinces; and he was going too slowly for Lord Ripon, who was naturally impatient of delays in the carrying out of his favourite policy. Lyall thought that the Viceroy suspected him of playing with the policy, and was inclined to be indignant, but no serious misunderstanding arose between them. Lord Ripon was enthusiastic, and very hard-working; he had of late had much to pain

and irritate him, and he knew that his term as Viceroy was drawing to a close; but he was in many ways singularly generous, so that he was able to regard without bitterness Lyall's apparent want of enthusiasm for the cause he had at heart. At bottom the two men sincerely respected each other.

"The Amir's Message" was accepted by 'The National Review,' and this pleased Lyall; but he makes a remark in a letter to his sister, which shows the view taken in India of his literary inclinations. He says that he prefers not to publish under his full name—

> Because the Indian papers always publish my bits with heading in large capitals, "A new poem by Sir A. L," and with mild remarks about a poetic Lieutenant-Governor. Please consider this. You must admit it is rather a stupid and troublesome sort of publicity, which does me no good.

The fact is that, although when he was a man of lower rank Lyall's verses had done much for his reputation, there was a feeling in India that a Lieutenant-Governor had better keep out of the magazines. And there is something in the feeling. Though in England very few know the difference between an Indian Lieutenant-Governor and an assistant magistrate, yet a Lieutenant-Governor is, or was, to Indian eyes, a notable personage. The point of view in the two countries is necessarily different; and as Lyall himself put it in a later letter, "it doesn't do for Lieutenant-Governors to be scribbling verses in reviews." So he discontinued the practice. Shortly afterwards he writes: "I have been reading over my collection of verses, they seem very unequal;

they ought to have been published before I was thirty."

In the course of the summer Lyall went down to the plains, though it was very hot weather, to open the railway bridge over the Jumna at Muttra, and do some business in Lucknow. He invariably got restless at Naini Tal, and on principle he disliked the summer migration to the mountains.

I always feel better pleased [he wrote from Agra] when I am down in the plains, seeing people and hearing the general talk of all the affairs of the country-side, than when I am perched on the top of the cool but remote hill; and undoubtedly isolation in the hills encourages selfish comfort among our officers.

This is an old subject of controversy, and there is much to be said on both sides; but Lyall's views on the subject were strong. In his next letter he writes: "I got back from the plains two days ago, rather sorry to leave the heat and the natives; there is nothing so stupid or unreal as this hill station life, where a lot of officials eat, drink, and play together." But he adds, "I was rather tired with constant travel, and came to the conclusion that I might have knocked up if I had been sent on the Anglo-Russian Boundary Commission."

He was annoyed about this time by some gloomy views upon the future of India which had been put forward by certain English officials—

I am astonished at such feebleness. I am no optimist about India, and I always feel the responsibility of driving the

immense machine of Government; but with the commonest courage and political sagacity we shall go on well enough for another twenty-five years, and who can tell what may happen in the next generation to Europe? . . . The natives . . . are loyal and quiet enough, if we will only keep down the knaves and fools among them, . . . but of course a weak Government that allowed itself to be frightened by a noisy or seditious party of young India might gradually let power slip from its hands.

In the course of the summer it became known that Lord Ripon was shortly to be succeeded by Lord Dufferin, and in November Lyall went to Agra to say farewell to the outgoing Viceroy. He found Lord Ripon, who had suffered much during the last four years, sensibly comforted by the sincere demonstrations of regret which the news of his retirement drew from the natives of India. Nevertheless it was a rather sad ending to a Viceroyalty, as Lord Lytton's had been. The post is one of great dignity and splendour, for a Viceroy of India rules three hundred millions of men, but it is open to many mishaps. Lord Ripon had been vehemently denounced in India; and, what was much more to him, his administration had not been too favourably regarded in England. Yet he deserved better fortune, for he was an upright and warm-hearted man, prompt and business-like in his work, and very cool and brave in time of trouble.

At the close of this year, 1884, Lyall sent to his sister the final copy of his "East and West," with strict orders that it should not be published under his name or initials. It was in several ways a pleasant year's end, for he now heard that she was shortly to be

married; and he was further cheered by a visit from his brother James, who seemed in a fair way to become the next Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab. Finally, Lyall learned that the editor of 'The Edinburgh Review' highly appreciated his articles, and that the French translation of his 'Asiatic Studies' had been excellently done. But his satisfaction was clouded over by one of those separations which are the curse of Indian service. His younger son, the rebel of the year before, had now reached the age when it was necessary to send him to England; and early in 1885 the boy and his mother started for Bombay, homeward bound, leaving Lyall "moved to something like tears" at the parting.

Soon afterwards he was under canvas again.

> We are here encamped on the edge of the forest, trying to catch elephants ... We have about a hundred elephants with us; two nights ago one went wild, killed a man, and was captured with great difficulty by being knocked over and severely beaten by one immense elephant whom we keep to do the policeman in camp. If any elephant misbehaves this huge brute knocks him down, and the culprit is at once chained up. There was a great fight in the dark; the wild elephant charged the tents; Parson Adams held a great lamp steady as a rock while Greig of the Forests fired at the beast's forehead and turned him just as he came within the lamp's flash, a few yards off—rather a neat display of nerve on both sides, and one worth a good deal of mashing in the London streets. What think you? he was going straight for the lamp.

The Rev. John Adams had won a Victoria Cross in the Afghan War. A braver and more devoted man never lived.

At this time Sir William Muir left the India Office Council in London, and his place was offered to Lyall, who refused it. He hoped for a seat in Council after his retirement, but he was not prepared to give up two years of the Lieutenant-Governorship. Nor had he definitely made up his mind to leave India if by chance there should be an opening for him in the Governorship of Madras or Bombay, or the Viceroy's Council. Still, the offer was a compliment, and gave him pleasure.

I was, on the 6th, within 16 miles of Meerut, so I drove in to pay a final visit to the Duke and Duchess of Connaught, who received me very well indeed. . . . The Duke and Duchess are very sorry to leave India; they like their independence out here. . . . The Duke is a very capable man, and I hope he may have high command some day. I always observe with envy the finished good manners of these sort of personages; they never seem to make the shadow of a mistake.

I have had Sir Frederick and Lady Roberts, . . . and Lord Randolph Churchill, who was rather interesting, and very decently reasonable. . . . I observe that an English-speaking native who can deliver himself of ordinary common-sense notions, in correct English, upon politics, and who understands the commonplaces of political discussion, somehow impresses the travelling Englishman as a man of remarkable genius, by utterances that would produce no effect at all out of the mouth of a European. . . . I showed him everybody and everything, let him talk, never argued, and only tripped him up very gently on matters of fact.

I constantly think of poor Gordon, shot down at Khartoum; observe that the solitary man sent out to hold his own among Orientals is always killed, his influence and popularity gradually wanes, and he is betrayed or openly murdered. We have had to send an army to avenge Cavagnari and Gordon;

we ought to have avenged Colley (whose case is different). I am dead against the whole system of posting English officers in outlying places. . . .

It is no use looking back; most of us can hardly bear to do that steadily; it is like looking at a strong river carrying away and out of sight all the scenes and friends that one has cared for, and all the old visions and hopes. What we have to do is to look the *present* steadily in the face, and to keep the mind clear of the old illusions that have always tempted people to despondency. There may be a good deal of quiet happiness still to be had in our own lives; and it is still possible, on the other hand, to make some grievous blunder. Let the current flow on.

Meanwhile the Boundary Commission which had been sent to meet the Russians on the northern frontier of Afghanistan was finding its task very difficult; there was again some talk of war; and the new Viceroy, Lord Dufferin, had invited the Amir to meet him in India. Lord Dufferin, who had seen Lyall, and at once appreciated his ability, had now asked him to be present at the meeting, to which he was looking forward. The situation was arousing much interest among the natives of India, and leading up to a remarkable display of loyalty. Lyall writes—

The Russian negotiations about Afghanistan are stirring India and doing much good, as all classes seem to turn to us for protection from invasion, and from the terror of Russian absolutism. I am struck with the manner in which the natives seem to recognise their dependence on us, and their interest in sticking to our rule. This is because the rule is really honest and sound in principle, in spite of minor mistakes and petty grievances. . . .

"The danger has made the Indian people very loyal; they much prefer us to Russia; they are in great dread of some widespread political revolution if we get an upset, and they are all afraid of each other. In short, we represent peace and a firm Government, whereas anything else leads towards unfathomable confusion. . . .

I rather suspect that our own nervousness about Russia's advance, and our constant protests against it for the past twenty years, have encouraged Russia to push onward towards a point that we so obviously desired to guard; but since the last Russo-Turkish war it has been clear that Russia is determined to take up a position whence she can threaten England, through India, with effect. Whether she will fight for this position we shall know in a few days.

Lyall might have added that our openly expressed nervousness about the Russian advance in Central Asia had done much to alarm the natives of India and shake their confidence in our power.

The meeting between the Amir and Lord Dufferin at Rawal Pindi was an interesting event, and had an important bearing upon the course of our relations with Russia. While it was going on, in April 1885, there occurred the conflict between the Afghan and Russian forces at Kushk, which nearly led to war between Russia and England,—so nearly that at one moment war seemed inevitable. In fact, nothing prevented it but the Amir's presence in India, and Lord Dufferin's personal influence with him.[1] If war

[1] General Kurupatkin, who afterwards commanded in the Russo-Japanese war, a moderate and sensible man, told me in 1895 that he had thrown all his weight upon the side of peace. No doubt this was true, but if the Amir had called upon us to support him it is not easy to see how we could have avoided going to war.

had broken out the excitement all over Asia would have been tremendous; but we had little to fear from it, for Russia was then very weak in Central Asia, and her position would have been one of great danger.

Lyall called upon the Amir with Sir Frederick Roberts, and describes him as—

> A big burly Afghan with a fat face and a gouty foot; also with plenty of brains and a bad heart.
>
> He was in a red uniform coat, worn loose, breeches and boots; received us with much courtesy and *bonhomie*, meeting us at the room door, shaking hands, and conducting us inside. . . . His conversation very easy and well expressed, you had only to start a subject and he would at once discuss it for five minutes—he is distinctly loquacious—his long residence in Tashkend has evidently given him a strong veneer of semi-European manners; he is quite unlike our stiff old-fashioned Indian rajas. Such is an outline of the appearance of a man universally said to be the most cruel and severe Amir that ever reigned in Afghanistan—a prince who spares none. . . . However, he is showing much readiness to fall into our diplomatic views, though I trust him not; and he dines with the Viceroy this evening.

Lyall's dislike of bloodshed and cruelty made him perhaps less than just to the Amir, who was certainly unsparing in punishment, but had a difficult position to maintain, and was obliged to hit hard. To use Lord Dufferin's words, he was "a strange strong creature," but I do not think he took any pleasure in cruelty. However this may be, Lyall's presence in Rawal Pindi was most valuable. Lord Ripon, when leaving India, had appointed me to act as Foreign Secretary, and as such I had to attend this meeting.

Lyall's experience and knowledge were placed ungrudgingly at my disposal, and were of the greatest help to me. Lord Dufferin consulted him freely.

The night before Lyall left our camp he was dining with Lord Dufferin. He writes—

> Lady Downe, who sat by me, said she read some bad news in the faces of the Viceroy and one or two other high people, so on the ladies' departure I closed up to Lord Dufferin, who told me the Russians had driven the Afghans out of Panjdeh. . . . After dinner there was a crowd to see a wild sword-dance round a bonfire in the camp centre, and Roberts and I talked earnestly in the shade outside the ring of people. Just as in 1879 the military leaders have cause to look grave, it is not this time a matter of mere plucky hill fighting with Afghans. . . . India is very quiet, and shows very goodwill; no class or section of the people seems to wish for our discomfiture, and all are fairly willing to stand by us, though this would not last long if we were unlucky. Our Government has its faults, but none seems to wish it to be suddenly interrupted or seriously endangered; and if the Russians were only near enough, I should not at all fear the results of a collision with them. But these distant campaigns, with vague and shifting "objective" (as the slang is), are ruinous to us.

It was an interesting night. I had brought to Lord Dufferin's tent, just before dinner, the deciphered telegram announcing the Panjdeh fight. He was in his close-fitting red uniform, having his innumerable decorations fastened on by his valet. When I had read out the telegram to him, and talked it over for a few minutes, it was arranged that I should go to the Amir, who was in a house two or three miles away, and get his opinion upon the news. Lord Dufferin

felt that much would depend upon the view he took; so I drove over with Major Talbot of the Political Service,[1] had a long talk with the Amir, and then returned. The wild sword-dance of tribesmen mentioned by Lyall was going on when we got back to camp, and I went up and said a word or two to Lord Dufferin, reserving a full report till the party had broken up. He took the whole thing with admirable coolness, as indeed the Amir had done, though it appeared to make war nearly inevitable. The Amir's answer when told that his general had been killed was the answer of King Henry after Chevy Chase: "I trust I have within my realm five hundred as good as he"; and with regard to the small body of troops which had been routed, he said he had a hundred thousand more. It was nothing, and I was not to "eat grief" about it. A day or two later his tone had changed, and he spoke fiercely of vengeance; but he had not in reality any desire to see his country made the battle-ground for England and Russia, and in the end war was averted. The incident had, on the whole, an excellent effect in India. As Lyall said, no class of natives wished to see us beaten by Russia; the native chiefs offered their contingents for service in the field; and

the educated native radical, who has been clamouring for political privilege, is in great fright at the bare notion of a

[1] Afterwards Lieutenant-Colonel Sir Adelbert Talbot, K.C.I.E. He was perhaps the best Persian scholar in India, and had been appointed to assist in the negotiations, as a man upon whose judgment and silence Lord Dufferin could thoroughly depend.

Russian colonel governing him, and has lowered his political tone materially.

No doubt our inaction, after the Russians had attacked and routed an Afghan detachment, was regarded by some as a sign of fear; but this did no serious harm.

Returned to his own province, Lyall began to contemplate another 'Edinburgh Review' article, and to think of his verses again.

It is pleasant [he writes to his sister] that Tennyson thought my verses "East and West" fine; they fall off at the end. I would rather not publish them at all just yet, so kindly keep them. "The Colonel" is being copied from book to book all over the country. . . . I notice, by the way, that it does impress disagreeably some nice people; they think it cynically immoral, just as my mother would have thought it.

We are tossing up and down upon fluctuating telegrams which prophesy peace and war alternately. . . . If we are decently prepared I am inclined to think we may as well fight and have done with it. . . . General Dillon told me yesterday that when the American General Grant came to London, and surveyed the hubbub of Parliament and the general comfortable talk of the town, he said, "If I were the English Government I would run your people into a bloody war; it would do them a damned lot of good"; and of course it would purify us, though the regimen is dangerous. Meanwhile, alarm at the idea of tumults and wars is making the Indian very loyal, and the Bengali Baboo is lowering his seditious agitations. . . . X. shows his own foibles by being so easily taken in by the pretentious talk of a class that depends entirely upon us for its existence. It is one thing to have won your liberties by the hard fighting of centuries; it is another thing to get them all freely given you, as a girl gets

her trousseau; and nothing will eradicate the difference in race education.

We have been out to a hill forty miles inland from Naini Tal, and have spent a lazy week on the top of it, wandering in a fine old forest of oaks and rhododendrons. I am angry with myself because I find my creative literary faculty not under hand; I can't take advantage of vacant days to sit down and compose an article—nothing seems worth saying, which means really that the . . . tendency to refined indolence is creeping over me. . . . Life in Naini Tal makes me dull and official; . . . nobody takes any interest in the high art of literature; and nothing else much interests me now, except history.

By the way, I am very much grieved to hear that Fitzjames Stephen has been rather seriously ill; he is one of the firmest friends I have in the world.

We have just heard that the Conservatives are going to attempt forming a ministry. I must say I hope and believe they'll fail. Lord R. Churchill, their promising man, is as yet too young, and will make a mess of any serious business, though I believe he will go far eventually. Perhaps, however, the Conservatives will do better in foreign affairs—they can't possibly do worse—than the Liberals; but I look forward to a reformed Liberal Cabinet, *minus* Gladstone.

India is very quiet; the Russian scare has strengthened our hands for the time; but I foresee internal fermentations before long, as soon as the advancing and growing party of eager, ambitious, hungry natives, who have been educated as if they were dusky Englishmen, and who are anxious for place and power, shall have organised their movements. They are not disloyal nor malicious; they are noisy, inexperienced, and determined to "get on"; they will soon resemble the class that has everywhere *begun* political agitations, and has everywhere, except in England, come to grief, —either defeated by a resolute despotism or swept away after a brief triumph by more thoroughgoing and violent reformers coming up behind. . . . Yet I firmly believe that

there is nothing in all this that cannot be met by political courage and capacity.

In the latter part of this summer—1885—Lyall went up for a short visit to Simla, where he was received "with great kindness and consideration by Lord and Lady Dufferin"; and he then, I think, first really made acquaintance with the man whose life he was to write twenty years later. He was impressed by the new Viceroy's methods.

His system, as Viceroy, is to stand free of all detail, to look only to the great questions, and to rely altogether for the ordinary working of the great administrative machine upon his councillors and secretaries. If, however, they blunder or "let him in," he is the man to lay about him very disagreeably.

Lyall was right in his description of Lord Dufferin's system, though Lord Dufferin's extreme kindness of heart made it difficult for him to "lay about him" as disagreeably as people thought him likely to do. He was, as Lyall noticed, the opposite in many respects of his predecessor, Lord Ripon, for Lord Dufferin did not care much about internal administration, and was not fond of reading files of official papers, in which Lord Ripon seemed to revel.

A little later Lyall received a visit at Agra from Grant Duff, who was on his way from his Governorship in Madras to meet Lord Dufferin in Simla; and Lyall enjoyed the time they spent together. He was somewhat surprised to find that Grant Duff was in Indian politics rather "a Tory despot"

than a reformer, evidently regarding the continuation of English predominance as India's only chance of salvation. It is interesting to see how a little personal acquaintance with the work of administration in India alters the English outlook in these matters. There are probably few Viceroys or Governors who do not return to England more conservative in their views about Indian affairs than they were on arrival. Ideas formed in a totally different atmosphere, thousands of miles away, however sound and reasonable they may seem, often fail to stand the test of practical experience on the spot.

Lyall was now nearing the end of his long term of service in India, and the thought of his future in England, which had frequently troubled him, began to press upon him closely.

From Agra I ran on to Lucknow for a night; thence back to Naini Tal, where we are on the eve of a grand ball (to-night) and a rush off into camp two days later, and so will end our fourth hill season. Next summer will be our last, *et puis?* What next? is a question I am eternally asking myself, especially lying awake before dawn, and wondering whether my career will suddenly come to a dead stop.

Meanwhile he was occupying his spare time by writing an article on Afghan affairs for 'The Edinburgh Review,' and was contemplating other literary work. The inclination to write verse had left him, for the time at least, but he says—

I should like to write one good novel or story before life ends; I feel I have it in me, if I could settle the plan of it.

By the way, I suspect all reminiscences of early life are very defective. I am sure mine would be most cloudy. I could never trust myself to say anything of my early days in India.

It is a pity that Lyall never carried out his wish. He was perhaps more fitted for essay writing than for sustained narrative fiction, where his contemplative nature and his fastidious taste in style might have hampered him. "I am never satisfied with my own composition, and go on revising it till it is spoilt or I am sick of it." This was not the way of the great novelists, of Scott or Thackeray or Dickens. But a novel of Indian life from a man of his varied experience and literary ability would nevertheless have been interesting, and so would a volume of reminiscences, which he did once contemplate. There, however, his neglect to keep a diary would certainly have placed him at a disadvantage.

The close of the year saw the overthrow of Burmah, which was perhaps the most striking incident of Lord Dufferin's Viceroyalty. As Foreign Secretary Lyall had done all he could to stave off a Burmese war, which would have been a serious complication while the Afghan troubles were upon us; but the time was now ripe for putting an end to King Thebaw's incessant provocations, and Lyall agreed in the proposed action, which Lord Dufferin discussed with him in camp at Agra.

One thing is good about the present conjuncture of Churchill and Dufferin: they are men of action, who like "something accomplished, something done," and who settle

questions that their predecessors have only discussed. . . . He is doing his foreign business very well. . . . Natives don't like our foreign wars and Afghan complications; they see that this leads towards more spending and fresh taxation; but they take it as natural enough that we should bowl over Thebaw and annex his country. "Who wouldn't do the same?" . . .

I am not, however, quite satisfied that we are right in building up a great Indo-Chinese dependency alongside of our Indian Empire; it increases our stake and divides our strength. . . .

I saw much of Mackenzie Wallace[1] and Durand, and heard all that is going on; there is not much doing, but the Amir is a troublesome barbarian.

I have been reading Maine's book on popular government; it makes one or two good points, as that the real people is always conservative, but is necessarily led by a violent minority, which takes possession of its suffrage in order to compass the minority's own ends. But . . . Maine won't take enough trouble. Some of the historical generalisations are interesting; and I could add a good chapter by applying his ideas to the subject of Oriental governments, and of the English attempt to govern India on modern principles. There is no doubt that the immense majority of Indians prefer a simple despotism, and hate the reformers and improvers; nevertheless the very small advanced and agitating minority is gathering power even here, because it appeals to democracy in England.

Lyall, by the way, had no great fear of excessive democracy in England. In the same letter he remarks: "The people of England are not in good French earnest in their Radicalism."

At this time he had published, in the December

[1] Sir Donald Mackenzie Wallace, K.C.I.E., was then Private Secretary to Lord Dufferin.

number of the 'Fortnightly,' the first of his articles written under the name of Vamadeo Shastri. They have since been republished in the second volume of his 'Asiatic Studies.' He was rather vexed that 'The Athenæum' announced him as the author, both because it gave the press in India an opportunity to criticise him, on the lines mentioned before, and because he got credit for sharing the sentiments of Vamadeo—

> People take all the ideas that I put into the Brahmin's mouth as my own, whereas I mean to show as near as may be possible what are the ideas of cultivated conservative Brahmins.

The distinction is important. There was probably not an Englishman living who was so competent, from continual discussion of these subjects with natives of India, to express their views. It was done so accurately that although the style is essentially English, a prominent Brahmin gentleman believed the articles to have really come from one of his countrymen. The thing was not a mere trick and *tour de force;* it was a genuine attempt to represent a phase of Indian thought; and therein lies the main value of the papers.[1]

Nothing new here. Burmah will ferment for some time to come, but will settle down steadily if nothing happens to disturb the Indian Empire just yet, though people are dis-

[1] Mr James Kennedy, late of the Indian Civil Service, who knew Lyall well, and was often consulted by him on literary and other subjects, writes about this: "Vamadeo Shastri was meant by him for the dramatic representation of a famous Sunyasi at Benares, who, after being Prime Minister of some native State, retired to Benares to cultivate the religious life."

covering already that our new conquest locks up a good many troops that we should like to have in India. You can't go on extending in this way without rather weakening your position; and the worst is that the real springs and motives of annexation are essentially commercial, arising out of the pressure at home to find new markets and fresh fields of enterprise. All the talk about military and official ambition spurring on to fresh conquests is superficial.

In the spring of 1886 Lyall was told that if he wished to extend his tenure of the Lieutenant-Governorship from April 1887 to the following November he could do so, and he accepted the offer.

Meanwhile he had reprinted, with some changes, his 'Verses Written in India.' This reprint is the edition which many of his friends possess. I had the pleasure of helping him to go over the verses and correct the proofs. We were neither of us very good proof correctors; but the verses not being my own, I ought to have been better than he was, yet there is a bad mistake in the most important line of his "Retrospection." "And then? One shot, and her *reign* was free." But bad as this was, I did not sin quite so grievously as the proof corrector of a later edition—it seems a shame to tell the story—who allowed that touching little poem, "After the Skirmish," to open with the line "Mid the broken *glass* of a trampled glade." That showed really diabolical cleverness. Luckily Lyall saw and corrected the error in time. Of his reprinted verses he writes to his sister—

Very curious that the "Colonel" should have got about in London, and should have been recited as you mention. I

accept it as a testimony of some kind of merit in the piece—in India it is "The Old Pindari" that they recite. . . . They are too fugitive and miscellaneous to be of any real value; one must have written more to make any kind of mark with them.

To Henry Irwin of the Indian service he writes—

I kept a copy of my verses for you. . . . "Theology in Extremis" is the only piece of any real value in the whole collection.

The cold weather of 1886-87, the last Lyall was to spend in India, brought as usual a great deal of entertaining of one kind or another, and many visitors —among them Lord and Lady Rosebery, Prince Frederick Leopold of Prussia, and various Indian officials. Then Lyall went down to Calcutta for a few days to see Lord Dufferin, and came back to camp, where he amused himself by seeing wild elephants caught and broken in. As he had a brother from England staying with him, and had just received news that his brother James was to be the next Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab, it was a pleasant New Year.

It is worth noting, by the way, that, except in this case, no two brothers have ever been promoted in succession to Lieutenant-Governorships in the Indian service. The Lyalls had charge of the two most important provinces of India, with a population of about seventy millions; and the younger brother proved to be perhaps the better, certainly the more popular, Lieutenant-Governor of the two.

In February 1887 Alfred Lyall sent to England his verses on "Siva," which, as he says,

> were evolved out of the contemplation of an idol adorned with a necklace of skulls and various symbols of destruction; while his temple is filled with wanton and even lascivious sculptures—the idea being the endless succession of death and birth. The truth is that the pantheism of the Hindus—the adoration of natural forces—and the science of the Europeans, which explains everything by the operation of natural forces, are being discovered to be very much the same thing.

The piece was not published until June 1888, after Lyall had left India, when it appeared in 'The National Review.' He showed me the manuscript before he sent it to England, and it seemed to me a true and powerful embodiment of the Hindu ideas of the God; but I believe that it does not appeal to many readers, and no doubt the train of thought is difficult to follow, unless one has seen in their fearless graven reality the things he describes—

> "The organs of birth and the circlet of bones,
> And the light loves carved on the temple stones."

I remember his being much troubled, *more suo*, by one line in this piece: "As the rolling flood of existence runs." He had written it also "the moaning flood," the whole stanza being somewhat different, and he discussed at some length the merits of the alternative words. He used to strike off his verses very rapidly, after the manner of the man he scoffed at, Longfellow; but, having done so, he would often torment himself for months over a stanza or a word.

They have made me a K.C.I.E., which is an honour, as I am bracketed in a way with Sir F. Roberts; James has got nothing, but the Viceroy, like an Irishman, has evidently distributed the pudding and the sauce separately, in order to stop as many mouths as possible. He has given preferment where he did not give honours, and *vice versâ*.

I do feel . . . that my latest mistake was to take this Lieutenant-Governorship when I might have had Council first. And I have before me the position of retired Indians, as good men as myself, living in dull obscurity at home; so that the thought of ending my active service at 52 is not pleasant.

In the beginning of May 1887 Lyall went up to Naini Tal, diverging from his road to open a bridge at Gauhati, near Bulandshahr, where in the Mutiny, thirty years before, he had had a narrow escape. He was riding into Bulandshahr, not knowing that it had been seized by a rebel force, and would inevitably have fallen into the midst of them, when he met on the road a man he had known slightly, who stopped him and warned him to go back. This man was in fact the rebel leader. A year afterwards he was under sentence of death, and Lyall was able to save him.

It may be desirable here to sum up in a few words the chief features of Lyall's Lieutenant-Governorship. His province having no dangerous external frontier, he was not troubled by any border expeditions or similar worries; while the internal peace of the province remained throughout free from disturbance. Lord Dufferin once said of India that "the bottom was always dropping out of the bucket." Perhaps,

since the Mutiny days, the description has been less applicable to the North-West Provinces than to most other parts of the country. In any case, during Lyall's term as Lieutenant-Governor he was not called upon to meet any sudden emergency of a serious nature. Nor was he by temperament inclined to stir up unnecessary difficulties. His natural tendency was to let things alone so long as they were doing reasonably well; to interfere as little as possible with the natives of the country; in fact, to keep the machinery of administration running smoothly rather than to signalise his term of office by any sensational reforms. Nevertheless, to use his own words, it happened that among the questions and transactions belonging to this period some were of more than ordinary public interest. There was the Local Self-Government Scheme already mentioned, by which district and municipal boards were invested with larger and more independent powers. Again, Lyall attached much importance to keeping the people contented by lightening as far as possible the burdens of taxation and improving the relations between landlord and tenant. Some steps were taken in that direction. The Oudh Rent Law was amended, and the system of land revenue assessment throughout the North-West Provinces was carefully examined. Meanwhile, attention was paid to public works, which have an important bearing upon the prosperity of the people. Roads, railways, and irrigation works were pushed on. Towards the close of Lyall's term a Legislative Council was established. Finally, just before he left India, an

Act was passed constituting a university at Allahabad, and he became the first Chancellor.

But, when all is said, there was in reality nothing very unusual about Lyall's Lieutenant-Governorship; nor perhaps was he regarded as exceptionally strong in the ordinary work of administration. He was a good administrator; but in India good administrators are not rare. The three things which were really remarkable about him—if one may judge from the talk of officers who served under him—were that he held his own with unvarying success against any interference from outside, that he always backed his men against attack, and that as far as possible he gave them a free hand in carrying out work entrusted to them. He specially objected to interference on the part of the Secretariat at Simla, holding that local governments ought to be practically independent, and if worried by any of the departments in the name of "the Governor-General in Council," he would deliberately choose his ground and bring on a conflict. His skill of fence made him a formidable antagonist, and he soon came to be respected and left alone. One of his subordinates, who was by no means an indiscriminate admirer, says about this: "The consequence was that Lyall's distinction was reflected upon us. Instead of being at the bottom of the Provinces, we felt ourselves at the top, and worked accordingly." The same correspondent writes: "Lyall always defended his officers against outsiders. As long as you were doing your best you were always sure of his support." He was "rather feared than popular"; but appa-

rently, though he could be severe himself, in private, to a man who went wrong, he would defend such a man stoutly against attack from any one else. "You must never flog your men in public," was one of his principles. Finally, Lyall, it is said, was always open to a suggestion, and if he found that a man had struck upon a useful scheme, would let him carry out the scheme in his own way, unhampered by interference in details. This encouraged men to keep their eyes open, and also to take responsibility.

Such was the reputation Lyall seems to have gained in the North-West Provinces. It is the reputation of a strong man. He was at the same time regarded as a somewhat indolent man, and perhaps with justice; though it may be that what was attributed to indolence was sometimes due to deliberate policy.

In the course of his last summer Lyall had a serious illness, and was for a time in some danger, but he recovered; and in October he went to pay a farewell visit to Simla, where he had the pleasure of staying with his brother James, now Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab. He found Lord Dufferin deeply engaged in supervising the building of a new Viceregal Lodge, which was a great improvement upon Peterhof, the straggling cottage where so many Viceroys had spent their summers. In Simla Lyall remained some days, meeting many old friends, and taking his last sight of the place where he had passed through such anxious times. I notice that in a letter written from there he regrets that he had not kept a

diary, for the last twelve years at least. As his biographer, I share the regret, for if he had kept one it would no doubt have enabled me to give a more complete and interesting record of his life.

Leaving Simla, he returned to Naini Tal, where he spent three weeks. "We are out on the hills—the mighty mountains of snow unveil themselves to us morning and evening—the climate is perfect—it is a good life to have known." Then followed a few days in Lucknow and Allahabad, "deeply engaged in valedictory functions, which are not very pleasant things when the farewells are, so far as my numerous native friends are concerned, really for ever." But the press of engagements kept him from thinking too much; and just as he was about to lay down his charge he was cheered by the engagement of one of his daughters to a member of his service. Then, once more an Englishman at large, after thirty-two years of official work, Lyall left Allahabad for Europe. "We went off honourably; there were many sayings of regret, especially for Cora, who is very popular. In a month we shall be virtually forgotten."

A day or two later Lyall was on board the *Verona* in Bombay harbour, homeward bound. He had spoken of his native friends. The last to say goodbye to him was an old servant who had come with him to Bombay. By chance I also sailed for England in the *Verona;* and standing on deck just before we started I saw them together. In a story of Indian life, written not long afterwards, I have described that parting—how "the two men stood looking at

one another in a silent life-long farewell that was very pathetic," and how when the final signal was given the Englishman patted his servant on the shoulder "with something very like a caress." Then he turned and went below. It was Lyall's farewell to India.

CHAPTER XIII.

LIFE IN ENGLAND.

1888–1892.

Arrival in England—The Council of India—A full and busy life—Makes many friends—Offered Governorship of the Cape—Writes 'Warren Hastings'—Publishes book of verse—Revolt in Manipur—Lectures at Oxford and Cambridge—Offered Governorship of New Zealand—Indian frontier policy—Publishes 'Rise of the British Dominion in India'—Change of Government—Lord Kimberley—Mr Gladstone and Mr Balfour.

LYALL'S voyage to England was not as pleasant as he had hoped to make it. After the manner of Indian officials, he had contemplated a stay on the Continent, and visits to various interesting places which he had long wished to see—perhaps a winter in Italy—but these plans were given up.

He did spend some days in Cairo, where Major Evelyn Baring was now established; also a day or two in Venice and Turin, and a few more in Paris. Lord Lytton was at that time our Ambassador in France, and Lyall was glad to see him again. But the winter on the Continent was a very cold one; and Lyall's old restlessness was upon him, for he was troubled about his future life in England, wondering whether he should find anything to do. His letters at

this time show signs of depression and anxiety. Early in January 1888 he was in London again.

His reception was such as to set his doubts at rest; for he had hardly landed, and seen his family, when he was offered a seat in the Council of India, which gave him immediate occupation.

He was still in the prime of life, just fifty-three years of age, and in fairly good health. He had done as well as a man could do in India, and was now assured at all events of a comfortable position in England, with some useful work, and yet with leisure enough to indulge his literary tastes. Nor was he debarred from the possibility of further employment abroad if an opportunity should occur. Nothing could really have suited him better; and any depression which he may have felt at the close of his Indian career soon passed off.

He had not yet begun to keep a diary, and the letters preserved by members of his family are fewer after his return to England; moreover, he had not lost the habit of leaving them imperfectly dated, so that it is not easy to follow closely the course of his life; but it soon became a full and busy one. During his first year in England he was elected a member of "The Club," of the Literary Society, and of the Breakfast Club; and innumerable houses were thrown open to him, for his conversational gifts made him welcome wherever he chose to go. Lord Dufferin wrote of him, "I am delighted that Lyall should have become a member of the Breakfast Club. He is one of the most accomplished and delicate-minded spirits

of our age, and has proved himself, in spite shall I say of his great literary talent, a most able and practical administrator."

His India Office work, though not too heavy, was enough to give him regular employment; he was also writing review articles; and he soon found himself being consulted on all sorts of subjects, official and literary. From the first, therefore, his time was fully occupied. His social success was specially remarkable. Perhaps his sister, Mrs Webb, had to some extent prepared the way for him, for she had made many friends; but his own character and qualities would in any case have brought him forward. A man who was much in town at that time said to me not long ago—

> I got quite tired of being asked by London hostesses who the Indian man was that every one was talking about. In a month or two he was to be seen everywhere, and all the clever women in London were his devoted admirers.

In some cases, no doubt, it was mere lion-hunting; but he made many real women friends, who remained his friends for the rest of his life.

Shortly after his arrival he writes to his brother James—

> The India Office is comfortable and convenient, but rather depressing: in the first place, death visits the Council rather frequently; secondly, we have all rather the look of old hulks laid up in dock, and are men who have said good-bye to active service; thirdly, the distance and difference between London and India makes one feel as if looking at things through a glass darkly, not face to face, and in a year or two

I shall begin to distrust my judgment. Lord Cross seems to me an honest, straightforward, sensible man, doing his work very well, and Godley[1] is an excellent good fellow. In Council we stand up and orate, which keeps down desultory discussion, but is not good for thrashing out questions.

I am deeply grieved at Sir H. Maine's death, his place is impossible to fill; he was a man of unique capacity, we shall not see his like again in England just yet. . . .

I have been leading a life that has been busy without doing over much. I find the India Office gives as much work as one will take; and London somehow devours all spare time. We took a house for six months in South Kensington, and have now just bought one in Queen's Gate, near the Park; though we shall not occupy it till November. In the meantime we are at Canterbury for two months; and I have run over here[2] for a few days to see Dublin and to talk about Irish problems on the spot. Balfour is here, and I have dined with the Lord Lieutenant: I have also seen various other persons. The main question seems to me to be whether a great agrarian reform will remove discontent, or whether the people will still insist on Home Rule when their chief, perhaps only, grievance is removed. On this point the difference of opinion is great, and it will only be settled by actual experiment. . . . The atmosphere of Ireland is not unlike that of some great station in India—the officials and the garrison predominate in society—the etiquette at the Viceregal Lodge is much the same; and there is the same indefinable feeling of being among a people who stand aloof from the English, although outwardly civil enough. The country is quiet, except in Clare and Kerry; but officials in Dublin are never free from some risk, and the police hover everywhere. I pass every day the spot where Burke and

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[1] Mr Arthur Godley, now Lord Kilbracken, was then Permanent Under Secretary in the India Office.

[2] His letter is dated from Dublin Castle.

Cavendish were murdered, right in front of the window of Viceregal Lodge.

The following are a few extracts from letters to M. René de Kerallain :—

I have left India, and have finally returned to settle in my own country. But, as you anticipated, . . . I have found no literary leisure here in London. I had scarcely taken my neck out of the official collar, when I was again put into harness, and introduced to a pile of blue-books and papers at the India Office. Moreover the stir and bustle of politics and society in this huge town are very disturbing to a man who has been for years leading the life of a contemplative Asiatic. In short, I find the greatest difficulty in taking up anything that requires thought and study.

I am sending you by this post a copy of the short notice of the late Sir H. Maine, which I wrote for 'The Law Quarterly Review.'

The letter goes on to discuss Burnouf's 'Science des Religions'—

We also, in England, are substituting for the Science, the History of Religions; but here again there is a tendency to go too far, and to discover a long connected filiation of ideas and worship where no such systematic evolution has really taken place. . . .

It is curious that you should have happened to see my verses in 'The National Review.' I am afraid the great god Siva's mystical utterances are not greatly appreciated amid the smoke and wealth and noise of London. . . . I believe that they (the verses) represent not untruly the idea which that divinity embodies.

Soon afterwards he writes again—

Your book reached me safely two or three days after I had

written to you about it. . . . I have been reading your introduction with much pleasure, and I observe with pride the honourable place accorded to my short notice of Sir H. Maine that appeared in 'The Law Magazine.' . . . Did I mention in my last letter that I have read and much appreciated M. James Darmesteter's 'Lettres sur l'Inde'? I am going to place the title of his book, among others, at the head of an article that will soon appear in 'The Edinburgh Review.' . . .

I learn with great interest that you have Bougainville among your ancestors. He was one of the enterprising and valorous Frenchmen who in the eighteenth century so well represented France beyond the seas. If you had had more like him, and a better Government at home, England's place in Asia and America would now be very different from what it fortunately is.

A curious book might be written upon the psychological problem which you suggest—whether the strong dose of sentimentalism introduced (by the English above all) into modern ideas about marriage, has or has not been detrimental to that wondrous institution. It will end by profoundly modifying the structure of the institution itself. Shakespeare, in whom we find all wisdom, says that when two persons ride on one horse one must ride behind; but these proverbs are becoming musty.

Early in 1889, when he had hardly settled down to his London life, Lyall received an offer which surprised and gratified him, but caused him some perplexity. He was asked whether he would accept the Governorship of the Cape in succession to Sir Hercules Robinson. The post was an important one; indeed, Lord Dufferin wrote that it had "now become the most important post that can be placed at the disposal of a public man;" and for those who knew Lyall it is interesting to speculate what his attitude would have been during

the eventful years which followed in South Africa. One can hardly imagine two men more different in character than Alfred Lyall and Cecil Rhodes. But they never came together, for, after mature consideration, Lyall declined the offer. He writes to his brother James—

I did not take the Cape Governorship, because I had just enough to live on in my way so long as the Council lasts, and it is hardly fair on my children that I should leave them again so soon, for six years. . . . Also, I myself am lazy about starting again on my wanderings; and Colonial Governorships do not pay unless one goes in for a series, as Norman[1] has done. But there was, I felt, a kind of presumption in refusing what is well known to be the most difficult of the Colonial appointments; for the control of the frontier districts and the protectorates is a very intricate business. The miserable native chiefs are getting into the hands of great speculating and mining companies, backed by powerful city men, . . . and the Governor, as High Commissioner, must either stand in with them, or run the serious danger of being undermined and intrigued against at the Colonial office and in Parliament if he stands up against them. . . . In this sort of atmosphere the simple Anglo-Indian, resting only on the very weak knees of the Colonial Office, is likely to come to grief. However, I think I shall take another Colonial offer if I ever get one.

He had now undertaken to write a memoir of Warren Hastings for the "Men of Action" series, and he was also at last making up his mind, on the repeated advice of good judges, among whom was John Morley, to publish his poems. During the

[1] Field-Marshal Sir Henry Norman, Governor of Jamaica and Queensland.

spring of 1889 he paid a visit to Lord Dufferin in Rome, which he enjoyed, for Lord Dufferin was the most delightful of hosts; and from him also Lyall received encouragement to let his verses face the criticism of the public. On the way he stopped in Paris, and had an opportunity of hearing from Lord Lytton something of French politics, which had always interested him. At this moment they were specially interesting because of the excitement caused in France by the growing influence of General Boulanger.

After his return to England Lyall writes to his brother about all these matters, and about various questions connected with India. He was beginning to be troubled by the restricted nature of his work in the India Office, where, he felt, "one can prevent some mischief, but do little good, on the Council"; and he did not altogether approve some of the measures upon which the Government of India was embarking. I was then in his old place as Foreign Secretary in India; and, largely on the suggestion of Major, now Sir Howard, Melliss, had proposed a scheme for the reform of the armies of Native States, so that they might be utilised for Imperial service, and that some outlet should be given to the military ambition of the higher classes.

As to this, Lyall writes—

I do not feel quite comfortable about Durand's project of arming the troops of Native States, it breaks with a policy that has been steadily adopted and gradually introduced

throughout the country, ever since we relieved the States of their old engagements to maintain troops for service with our own.

He wrote to me more than once on this subject, as indeed he did on many other questions. At times I could not see matters exactly as he did, but I never differed from him without extreme reluctance; for his thoughtful study of Indian history,—not only of its facts but of the meaning of them,—and his consequent knowledge of Indian character and sentiment, had deeply impressed me. Whenever I found myself obliged to advocate measures which he disapproved, I used to be haunted by an uneasy feeling; and the conviction that he sincerely disliked interfering with us who were on the spot, made this feeling all the stronger. Nevertheless, in regard to the armies of the Native States I am inclined to think that the balance of argument was in favour of the course adopted.

Another Indian question in which he took much interest at the time was the tendency to centralisation,—to the increase of power in the hands of the Supreme Government in Simla, and interference with the powers of the Provincial Governments. He had always felt strongly about this, and had when a Lieutenant-Governor held his own very successfully. "Provincial decentralisation," he writes, "subordinate Home Rule, is obviously the right way of managing our unwieldy empire; and all the departments should be entirely under the Local Governments." The danger of over-centralisation in India is one which

does not decrease with time; and Lyall's view on this point is worth noting.

In 1888 he had contemplated writing a memoir of Sir Henry Maine, and had also thought of taking up the story of Dupleix, whose career in India had always interested him. Both these projects he had to give up.

"I am pledged to 'Warren Hastings,'" he wrote, "and this will occupy all my spare time, which in London is little enough." 'Warren Hastings,' and the long-delayed volume of verse, duly appeared before the end of the year 1889, and Lyall received many congratulations upon both. Fitzjames Stephen wrote about the former, with a curious economy of stops, that he had read it with the keenest possible pleasure and with warm admiration.

> It seems to me to do for Warren Hastings exactly what I always wished to be done for him. No one can say it is otherwise than completely put and what is more quietly and unenthusiastically put, and as you read it you feel that Burke's notions about him were simply mad injustice arising mainly from want of information or rather excess of information uninformed by sympathy so that he could never for a moment see that the whole Indian enterprise was not a tyrannical and detestable but essentially and potentially the greatest of English one might almost say of human enterprises.

Stephen adds a remark which seems true. "I don't much like your frontispiece. The portrait in the Council Room at Calcutta is much better." That fine portrait, with its enigmatical face, as Lord

Reay called it in a letter to Lyall, often struck people as having some likeness to Lyall himself.

About this book he received an interesting letter from the famous war correspondent Archibald Forbes—

I have been reading with great delight your 'Memoir of Warren Hastings' in the "Men of Action" series. . . . One sentence struck me as a marvellous coincidence. Writing of Hastings' first wife (p. 11) you have the following: "But the poor lady died in 1759 after bearing him two children, neither of whom survived childhood; and of this brief episode in his eventful life only the bare facts remain, like the names and dates on some obscure stone among the historic monuments of a great church."

The coincidence I refer (to?) is that between your simile and the actual fact. Some years ago, wandering through the graveyard of Cossimbazar, keeping a watchful eye for inscriptions—and serpents—I came upon "the names and dates on an obscure stone" of Hastings' first wife and their two children—their names and the dates of their death.

Wilfrid Blunt wrote about the book of verses—

I feel sure it will be successful, for it is not like the generality of books of poems, which have more manner than matter, and by any one who knows the East it will be recognised as astonishingly true and powerful. To me it has been almost painfully so. . . . The pieces I like best are "The Amir's Message," "The Old Pindaree," especially the ending, and "The Hindu Prince." . . . I also like extremely the "Amor in Extremis"—and perhaps, best of all, "Badminton," which is quite perfect for a thing in so small a compass.

Grant Duff wrote: "Your delightful little volume has reached my hands. You will now be recognised, by all whose opinion is worth sixpence, as entitled

to a very high place among English poets." The book was well received by the public, and at the beginning of 1890 Lyall writes to Sir Frederick Roberts, then Commander-in-Chief in India—

I am very glad indeed to hear from you again; and it is a pleasure to know that you like my small book, which has sold very well in England. Here they read the verses as curiosities; but I rely on India for appreciation of any true value that the pieces may possess.

Similarly he writes to Henry Irwin—

I have always believed that they could be properly understood nowhere except in India, where they were written. . . . I particularly value your appreciation. . . . I notice that you have put in italics the line in the "Amir's Message" which I myself always thought the best—

"It is He gives wealth and vengeance, or tears o'er a blood-stained grave."

Lyall always felt that readers who had not been in India could not be expected to understand some of the allusions, or appreciate the local colour. Rudyard Kipling has shown both in prose and verse how boldly a man may disregard this consideration; and Lyall perhaps attached too much importance to it. But I have more than once found that English readers who spoke highly of Lyall's poems had completely missed the meaning of certain passages.

He writes to Mrs Webb—

. . . We were at poor Browning's funeral—the Abbey looked mysterious in the half light; and the music was very fine—though it seemed a strange thing to lower a coffin down into a stone vault, as if it were some precious thing to be

carefully preserved and locked up in a store-house, instead of actually committing earth to earth, according to the natural putting off of our mortal vesture.

Early in the year he was paying some visits to friends in Scotland, and had been in Edinburgh.

Drove round and round through the town; saw Holyrood, and went to Kirk on Sunday, to see the Presbyterian service. Its simplicity attracted me—no prayer-books; a Bible and hymn-book—singing, praying, and reading alternately. I think it's nearer the true feeling than all the papistical soul-destroying ritual of the High Anglicans and Romans, which my Puritan Catechism calls spiritual whoredom.

I have little to tell. On Saturday we dined with Lady Lyttelton where was Mr Gladstone. . . . After dinner I found myself next the G.O.M.; and we discoursed somewhat on poetry, and somewhat on the Indian Councils Bill. He talked in a powerful way; perhaps the manner more impressive than the matter, but very interesting.

I breakfasted with Leonard Courtney yesterday, to talk politics with him on India, then I went to see Lord Herschell on the same subject. I am much interested in the Indian Councils Bill, and I find that unless one discusses such things with English politicians, one entirely misses the parliamentary point of view. I am going to-night to the Lords to hear Lord Northbrook move an amendment to the Bill in Committee. It is a much milder one than I expected. . . .

I went on Friday afternoon to Lord Hartington's garden party, where I was well amused by seeing many folk. . . . Lord Hartington's face as he shook hands with innumerable guests expressed honest *ennui;* but with him people rather liked that. . . . Wednesday to Lady Ribblesdale, where Oscar Wilde held forth with a series of half absurd paradoxes on art and literature. Morley, who was there, looked grim at first, but soon entered into the spirit of the man, . . . and so ends our season. I hope I shall settle down

to some literature, and get rid for a time of office work, which has been troublesome.

A little later he writes to Sir Frederick Roberts—

I am still rather uneasy about the arming and organising of the troops of Native States; but I do not oppose your measures in Council, because the Government of India ought to take the responsibility. I myself like my work in Council, it gives me enough to do—for I am Chairman of the Public Works Committee—and does not occupy all my time; indeed, it sometimes gives me more work than I care for.

He soon got to dislike the Public Works Committee, for it gave him more trouble than all the other Committees put together, and, as he said, he was not born to figures and calculating. From his Eton days this had been his weak point. The reduction in the number of the Council about this time did not decrease the work; and as Lyall was a member also of the Political Committee, which dealt with the work of the Indian Foreign Office, and, moreover, was greatly interested in the proposed reorganisation of our native army, he had his hands fairly full.

As to this last matter, he fully recognised the necessity for strengthening our fighting line against external enemies, by enlisting a larger proportion from the martial races of northern India; but he saw the danger of putting "too many of our eggs in one basket," and also that of causing discontent among the populations from which our old sepoy army used to be drawn. It is one of our most serious difficulties in dealing with the question of our native army that in a vast country like India,

where the population consists of many races differing in language and religion and habits, fully as much as the nations of Europe, the question has to be regarded not only from the military but also from the political point of view. With his keen sympathy for the soldier, joined to his exceptional knowledge of native feeling, Lyall's opinions were here particularly valuable.

He was at this time troubled about the North-West Frontier.

> It seems to me as if the Indian Foreign Office were not handling the Amir very tenderly; and I should be inclined to caution about treading on his skirts by pushing too far inwards among the frontier tribes or beyond the Kojuk.

This was a question on which Lyall had to some extent seen reason to modify his views. At the end of his time as Foreign Secretary he had been inclined to the opinion that although the Forward Policy in Central Asia, as originally advocated by Colonel Colley and others, was a mistake, it was desirable to bring under our control, in one way or another, the independent tribal country lying between India and Afghanistan. Before Lyall left the Foreign Office portions of that tribal country had in fact been brought under our exclusive protectorate,—notably some part of the country occupied by the great tribe of the Afridis, the most powerful of all the frontier tribes. And as late as the end of 1889 Lyall wrote to his brother, the Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab—

There is much to be said for a policy of steadily advancing our protectorate, until we have all that belt of country well in hand, and avowedly within the sphere of our political influence. Sandeman's proposals for pushing up from Zhob, taking the Mahsud Waziris in the rear, and opening out a through line by the Gomul Pass, seem to me good strategy, for the frontier tribes can only be subdued and reconciled to us by effective subordination to our power, and we must have command of all the passes into India.

But as time went on he came to the conclusion that we were going too far or too fast, and incurring considerable risk of setting not only the border tribes but also the Afghans against us. On this point he spoke to me earnestly, and I afterwards had much correspondence with him about it.

Lyall had long been an advocate of Provincial Councils in India, and he writes to his brother—

I forget whether I have written since the Indian Legislative Councils Bill passed the Lords. As I had much to do with the Bill framed by this office, I was interested in its progress. Lord Northbrook intended to propose an amendment for the partial introduction of representative institutions—*i.e.*, the elective principle; and I should have been glad enough to agree if I could have seen my way to any method of popular election that would not have thrown the whole electorate into the hands of wire-pullers. I discussed this with Lord Northbrook, who, when he came to the working out of his view, was brought up by the same difficulty, and finally carried a very mild amendment. . . . The difficulty will be, as you say, to find the Provincial Councils something to do; but this may be overcome if the Government of India are in earnest in decentralising legislative business.

The Government of India appears to be developing a

forward foreign policy. I suspect that matters are being pushed on too far and too fast in the quarter of Kashmir, Gilgit, Chitral, and Hunza, that is. I doubt whether all this extension of our protectorate is really useful or necessary, and Sandeman on his side is working with equal activity. However, so long as the Government of India can find the men and the money, perhaps no great harm is being done—we shall see at the next great crisis. A supplementary measure is the reorganising of the Native States armies, to which I cannot reconcile myself. I think it is a dangerous game, not worth the risk, and a new departure from an old traditional policy.

But in the present state of things, when two rival Bills for reforming the Indian Councils are before Parliament, I am particularly anxious that travelling M.P.s should be well posted up. . . . The Cabinet has resolved to resist any measure for the present that involves electoral representation in the Legislative Councils of India—but I hope a Council of some kind will soon be established in the Punjab and in every large province. Bradlaugh is, in truth, very lukewarm about his own Bill—he is sensible enough, and sees the difficulties of letting in all these talking Indian politicians.

I have been reading the papers regarding the extension of our authority over the Zhob valley and the Gomul pass. I think the measure on the whole good: and it will strengthen our frontier arrangements—though we can't pronounce on the policy until it has stood the test of another row in Afghanistan. It works well enough in peace times; but in a war the tribes and levies might turn against us. . . . It shows a want of real judgment to attack the "Lawrentian" system because times have now changed—that was the best system available before the Afghan war of '78-81, and Sandeman's occupation of Quetta, Peshin, gave us a real hold on Beluchistan and South Afghanistan and on the Amir.

The dissertation (in Dilke's 'Problems of Greater Britain') upon Russia and Afghanistan is another instance of the way

we go on cackling over Russia's advance, and all the dangers of internal revolt and defeat in the field, until we shall encourage not only the Russians to attack us, but the natives to bully us by threatening a rise against us. . . .

I have seen something of A., son of your frontier chief—but these youths are quite comfortable in London—they get demoralised by Bengalis, who turn them all into Radicals, with the assistance of Irish M.P.s, who assiduously preach Home Rule to them.

I met C. and Mrs C. in town—they are loud in praise of your hospitality, and seem really rather grateful, which is rare. . . . However, I hope you won't be troubled any more, save for very special reasons; and I am much indebted to you for so kindly responding to my calls on you. Every M.P. who visits India with honest political intent returns a wiser and more sober man. I think even Bradlaugh was made more cautious by his glimpse of Bombay.

During this year Lyall had written an article in 'The Edinburgh Review' on "Polytheism," and sent it to Mrs Holland.

I feel that I owe you a kind of apology for sending an article that is redolent of Hobbism—the spirit of antagonism to Catholicism. I forgot at the moment that it might very reasonably jar on your conceptions of what is true and right. I stand so much outside that circle of feelings that I am stupidly numb towards them. I don't for a moment suppose that it is good for a high intellectual faith to be put under a despotic temporal power; though I may hold that in the last resource the civil law should always be supreme, even in matters of faith and morals—and I am quite aware that the Chinese level of morality is very low. I am dealing, as the title of my paper denotes, with Polytheism, which is not a serious form of religion, and may fairly be kept under control. I have a sufficient contempt for people who are so ignorant as to compare even Buddhism and Christianity.

It is interesting to see that however unorthodox he may have been, he never lost his respect and even affection for the faith of his fathers. A little earlier in the year, while on a visit to his friend Spencer Walpole in the Isle of Man, he went alone to Peel, to see the ancient ruined Cathedral of the Bishops of Sodor and Man.

> The Bishopric [he writes] is, I think, the most ancient in the United Kingdom. . . . It is pleasant to . . . look out of the windows over the quiet sea, feeling that one is at a point where stood one of the earliest and most remote outposts of primitive Christianity.

The year closed for him with the preparation of a despatch to the Government of India on the vexed question of Frontier Policy. The Viceroy, Lord Lansdowne, had come to the conclusion that circumstances had now made it "absolutely necessary to abandon the policy of non-intervention in the affairs of the frontier tribes." It was not his wish to interfere in any way with the independence of these people, but he desired—

> By means of tribal allowances in payment for service rendered, and by cordially supporting the legitimate influence of the head-men, to gradually establish in each of the tribes a friendly and responsible authority on which the Government of India can rely for the preservation of peace and order.

It was urged that the policy had not been unsuccessful where it had been tried, and it seemed "not unreasonable to expect that it will succeed on the Punjab frontier as it has elsewhere." In fact, the

policy inaugurated by Sir Robert Sandeman in the south, and supported by Sir Frederick Roberts, had prevailed over the non-intervention policy of the Punjab. Lyall drafted the reply, as any one knowing his style could have told. By it Lord Cross accepted the Viceroy's proposals, but urged that they should be carried out cautiously, and with due consideration of the importance of "maintaining friendship and a good understanding with the Amir of Afghanistan."

About this time occurred the Parnell scandal and the attack of the Irish party upon their chief. Lyall writes to Mrs Holland—

> Parnell fights like a wild boar in one of Snyder's pictures, ripping and tearing the hounds that are upon him. It is interesting to see how the Irishmen and Irish *women* whom I meet sypathise with his fierceness. Lady ——, a Galway woman, but a true Protestant and Unionist, cannot conceal her liking for the man's fighting quality.

But though Parnell's courage appealed to Lyall, as it did to most men, he was opposed to Home Rule. He had written not long before that he thought the Ministry would soon be out, "which I shall regret, though I am strongly Liberal, for I don't want to be governed by wild Irishmen." And his feeling against Home Rule remained with him to the end.

Lyall had now finally given up sport of all kinds, and did not care to join in the shooting-parties to which he was asked; but he was enjoying many country visits, and expeditions to the Continent and elsewhere. For the next twenty years these journeys

seemed to satisfy his restless spirit more than anything. Ireland, Scotland, Wales, the Isle of Man, France, Switzerland, the Riviera, Italy, yachting tours in the Mediterranean,—all were somehow combined with a large quantity of solid work, official and literary. He was never so happy as when he was on the move. And already, after three years in Europe, he was in better health and spirits than he had ever been in India.

I, myself, never discovered [he wrote to Lord Roberts] how much I had lost in India, until I returned to England, and found how much I gained in strength and general freedom from headaches and small maladies.

The year 1891 opened with a very deplorable tragedy—the rising in Manipur, and the death of some British officers and native soldiers at the hands of the rebels, who were led by the Senapati, a brother of the ruling chief. Lyall was much distressed.

The Manipur disaster is lamentable. When the first news came I felt, as in the old days of the massacre at Kabul, that kind of mixed horror and anger produced by the imagination of the cruel death of men whom one has known well and valued.

It has been noticed before how keenly Lyall felt such things—much more keenly indeed than many men who were regarded as more generally sympathetic. His imagination was exceptionally strong, and no doubt also his recollection of old Mutiny scenes enabled him to call up a vivid picture of what had occurred. That easy indifference to the fate of our

people in distant parts of the world which one is at times surprised to see, even in men of kindly natures, was utterly foreign to him; and he was always stern in insisting upon the necessity for condign punishment. Much as he disliked bloodshed, he regarded with indignation the weak sentiment which makes men advocate mercy for those who have shown no mercy. He thought it a cruel betrayal of the men who were serving England, whether they were Englishmen or Indians, to let the murder of any of them pass unavenged. It would be well if our statesmen all had as clear an understanding of the principle that care for the lives of our servants is a nobler thing than generosity to their enemies. In the Manipur case due punishment was inflicted upon the leaders in the massacre, and we who were in India knew that on his part at least there had been no shrinking.

It had been a difficult position for Lord Lansdowne, who was now Viceroy of India, and Lyall wrote to me—

I do most heartily admire the justice and firmness of purpose displayed in executing the Senapati. I hope there will be no interference, in my absence, from the India Office.

This case, it may be observed, naturally seemed to Lyall a warning against the policy of arming the Native States. In another letter to me he writes—

I have, as you know, always thought the risk lay in the chief losing control of his own disciplined force or weapons, which would fall into the hands of daring leaders of revolt—an Arabi Pasha or a Senapati,—and this would render the

business of restoring order a much more serious thing than it usually is now, when the Political Agent goes to arrange things with a slender escort and a stout heart. . . . I am not going to oppose or thwart the policy now that it is adopted, but I still think it dangerous—especially to the chiefs themselves.

Early in 1891 he was employed upon two lectures regarding the Indian frontier, which he had undertaken to deliver at Oxford in the following term; and he was also engaged to give the Rede Lecture at Cambridge. His subject in this case was "Natural Religions in India." He was rather nervous about these lectures; but they went off well, and he was pleased. He received various letters about them, among others one from Lecky, who wrote of the Rede Lecture—

I have already read it once carefully through, and am in the middle of it for a second time. It seems to me one of the very best things you have done—as good as any of the 'Asiatic Studies'—and I am sure it will do much to raise the standard of such enquiries in England. You must have added a good deal to the spoken lecture. It is a deeply fascinating subject, and I am not sure that we have got much beyond the Hindu conception of the Universe with all our science.

About this time Lyall was asked to write a history of India, a book on Modern India, and an article on the religious future of India. All these invitations he refused, but he took much trouble in working through the proofs of Lord Curzon's book on Persia, which no doubt profited by his suggestions. He had, in fact, become recognised as a leading authority on Asiatic subjects in general; and his reputation in

this respect increased, deservedly, as years went on. Meanwhile a portrait of him by Shannon had been unveiled in the Convocation Hall of the Allahabad University, which he had founded, and of which he had been the first Chancellor; and in the speeches delivered on this occasion, Lyall's services and character were warmly eulogised both by the Viceroy, Lord Lansdowne, and by the native nobles of the Province. Lord Lansdowne's speech contained the following words:—

He will certainly long be remembered as the Lieutenant-Governor who gave these provinces a University, a Legislative Council, and a Rent Law suited to the requirements of the country, an act which, as Raja Shiva Pershad has justly said, is a standing monument to the tact and ability with which Sir Alfred Lyall handled that most difficult question. His interest in public works, and particularly in the development of the railway system of this part of India, was unceasing, and served to prepare the way for many useful enterprises which have since been brought to a successful conclusion. . . .

Of his brilliant and attractive personal qualities and attainments I hesitate to speak in the presence of those who know him so well. He was, above all things, a student, and a thorough student, from the day of his arrival in India until the day when he left it. Probably no Indian administrator has ever been at more pains to understand the country which he helped to govern. He was one of those who are not content with knowing the surface of human affairs, but who seek rather to search out the sources of events, and the great principles which underlie them. His knowledge was consequently exceptional in its extent and in its thoroughness; it gave him an exceptional insight into the life and character of the people of India, and that sympathy with their feelings, without which no Indian statesman can hope for success. To

culture of this kind Sir Alfred Lyall added a remarkable literary ability which gave a charm to everything which proceeded from his pen. There can be little doubt that had he preferred such pursuits to those of an official life, he would have risen to the highest rank among modern writers of the English language.

The speech pleased Lyall, who wrote to a friend, "I am very sensible of the value of so public an attestation, from such a Viceroy, of my services in India."

In June 1891 Lyall writes to his French correspondent, M. de Kerallain, who was thinking of translating his Rede Lecture—

I have some intention of publishing a second volume of 'Asiatic Studies' towards the close of this year: but all that I really had to say upon Indian religions I have, I fear, already said, and the essays in the second volume will be rather historical than religious.

The same letter goes on to speak of Warren Hastings, and connected questions.

I think that the chief reason why the English fortunes prevailed over the fortunes of France in the contest for India, was that the English contrived, in the Seven Years' War, to secure the command of the sea, and gradually to establish their naval superiority. Other causes were local, and of minor importance. A book of first-class merit has appeared recently, 'The Influence of Sea Power on History,' by Captain Mahan of the American Navy, which I particularly recommend to the attention of all French politicians.

Is there any evidence, in your archives, that the English East India Company employed large sums of money in France to influence Ministerial personages in their decision to abandon and recall Dupleix in 1754? We have such a rumour.

My Rede Lecture has been delivered; and the venerable University of Cambridge, which has honoured me with the degree of Doctor of Laws, was pleased to signify its approbation of the lecture by ordering it to be printed. I shall lose no time in sending you a copy, which will be entirely at your disposition for literary purposes. Before delivering my ideas on Natural Religion to an audience which included the Vice-Chancellor and other dignitaries, I carefully corrected any tendencies to divagate into remarks or allusions that might seem to contain any application to matters of European faith or doctrine, so that I think a skilful translator need have no fear of the Inquisition. In short, I kept closely to my subject, which is Religion in India.

It is a pleasure to see that shortly afterwards he writes to his brother in India—

Pray do your best to keep up a friendly understanding with Durand; for my sake he will be inclined to work with you.

But he goes on—

I don't feel at all comfortable about India; but then I have always been haunted by presages mainly by reason of the steady growth of our responsibilities without equivalent increase to our strength. We are trading on a vast scale with a very low reserve. I was against taking Burmah for this reason, much too vague and general to be forcible. . . .

I have written to Roberts and Durand pointing out the lesson given, as I think, by Manipur against arming these Native States, and especially against allowing them cannon, beyond their old pieces.

In the course of this year he lost his sister, Mrs Holland, whose name occurs so often in these pages. He writes—

For us brothers and sisters, Sibylla's death is a matter of the deepest grief and an irreparable loss; it is the first blow to our

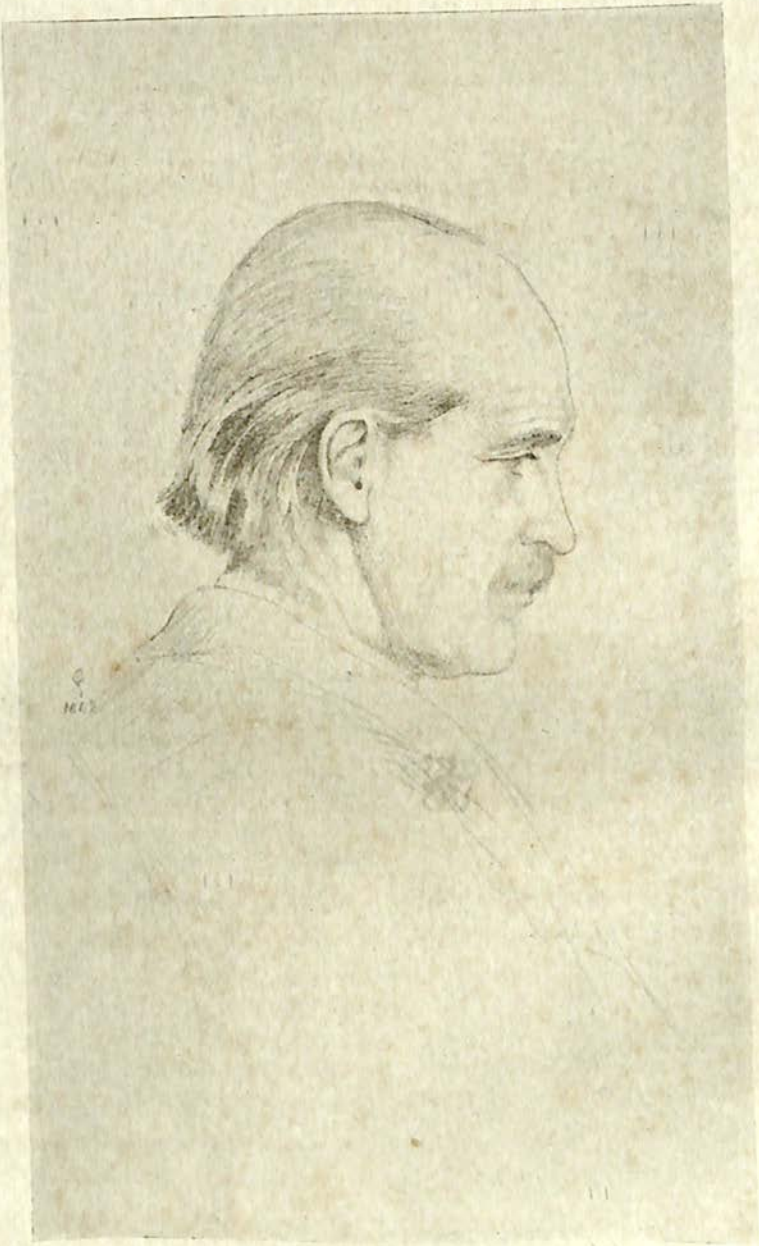
lifelong companionship, and the first serious gap in our circle. . . . There was widespread regret among all classes at Canterbury, where she was very much beloved.

Her letters, published by her son Bernard Holland, give proof of a beautiful character; and after reading them one can well understand the deep affection she inspired.

A year later I find Lyall writing from Harbledown—

I came down here this morning—rather reluctantly, at the last moment—for I knew it would be painful to see this house again, and so it has been. Everything reminds me of last September; nor can I free my imagination from the figure of dear Sibylla in the garden or the rooms. But she has gone, borne down on the rolling flood of existence, and soon these shadows of her will also vanish into oblivion.

In January 1892 Lyall was offered the Governorship of New Zealand, and had some inclination to accept it. But this would have involved the loss of his appointment in the Indian Council, and an expenditure considerably exceeding the pay of the Governorship, so that after consideration he felt it wiser to decline. He would have returned to India if one of the Governorships of Bombay or Madras had been offered to him; for though he liked London life, and especially his literary work, he always felt, and more than once said to me, that as long as a man could remain in active service of an honourable character it was the right thing to do. Neither of these posts, however, came his way, and he remained in England. From the point of view of India it was no doubt a waste of so much ability and experience;



1892. FROM A PENCIL SKETCH BY THE MARCHIONESS OF GRANBY.

but my belief is that for Lyall's own happiness it was better that he did not enter upon a fresh term of Indian service.

About this time, the beginning of 1892, he writes to Lord Roberts—

> One line to convey to you my warm and hearty congratulations on your accession to the peerage. . . . It is an honour that gives great pleasure to all who have known your career during the last 35 years. I think we met for the first time at Bulandshahr in September 1857. . . . I am delighted to find my prophecy fulfilled.
>
> You who are so influential on the Council will not mind my saying that it seems to me that the Indian Government is enlarging its borders rather rapidly. You have pushed forward to the slopes of the Hindu Khush, where you are occupying remote and exposed posts—you are widening your skirts all along the Afghan hills, and you have taken a large sweep eastward and north-eastward on the Burmo-Chinese frontiers. The Government thus produces on me the impression of a great trading firm that is constantly extending its operations and locking up its funds without increasing its reserve capital; for your fighting army is much the same as before, and you cannot safely augment it, unless you import more English troops. . . . Is it necessary to continue this incessant expansion? . . . I would ask your particular attention to the alteration necessarily made in the balance, so to speak, of our liabilities for defence of the Indian Empire by our acquisition, since 1886, of a long and unsettled frontier in contact with China on the east. Formerly our rear and flanks, as we faced north-west, were tolerably secure; now we have a powerful neighbouring State to take into account.

Lyall was well aware, and he said so in this letter, that it was not easy from the distance of England to estimate exactly all the bearings of

the situation. He was therefore most reluctant to interfere with the policy of the Indian Government or of the men on the spot. But throughout his time in the Council in England his advice was always the same—that we should as far as possible husband our resources, and refrain from any further extension of our responsibilities. No one felt more strongly that the foundation of our security was our force of English troops, and that the supply of these was small and difficult to increase. No doubt he was right, but it is not always easy to prevent the extension of responsibilities.

He writes to Rivett-Carnac—

> Life in England seems rapidly to shut out the ordinary Indian associations; one falls into other grooves and consorts with new acquaintances; but you will find that one often looks back to the quiet and ease of Indian existence at its best, where there is no haste or crowding, and a peculiar simplicity of life, even when it seems luxurious.
>
> For myself I prefer having got back to England before 60 years of age; the past five years at home have been very pleasant to me.
>
> I am sorry that the young Nawab of —— is coming to London; my own conclusion, after some experience, has been that if the Indian princes get a run in civilised luxuries and vices early, they are seldom content afterwards with the primitive life among their own people.

Meanwhile Lyall's literary work was going on, and he was being asked to undertake all sorts of tasks. He was invited, for example, to contribute to 'The Nineteenth Century' a sonnet on Tennyson, but he answered that he had "given up the verse-making

business." His main literary effort during the year was the conversion of some papers written for the University Extension series into a book on the 'Rise of the British Dominion in India.'

In the spring of this year Lyall was yachting with his friend, Mr P. Ralli, and on the 15th of April was at Constantinople. Then he went on to various places in Greece, about which he writes in a rough diary, the entries mixed up with dissertations on historical and literary matters in a way which makes them very confusing to any one but the writer. This is the first attempt at a diary I have found among his papers. It extends over several years, and contains valuable notes, some of which I recognise in his published works; but it is rather a bewildering volume to deal with,—beginning from both ends, and partly written in pencil, and vague as to dates, after his manner.

About this time he writes to M. de Kerallain—

I am much obliged to you for directing my attention to the 'Revue Historique' for April, where I have found the notice of 'Warren Hastings'; nor have I the slightest reason for dissatisfaction with your treatment of me or of my hero. On the contrary, your remarks seem to me to be at the same time impartial and interesting, a combination of qualities not always easily attained; for I have observed that my own writings have been occasionally depreciated as not being sufficiently one-sided. The general reader likes to be told distinctly whether a famous man is to be classed with the devils or with the angels. . . . I am struck with the justice of your remark that, to judge by the treatment accorded in England to Clive and Hastings, in spite of their wonderful success, they would assuredly have fared no better than

Dupleix and La Bourdonnais if they had failed. The fate of Lally, however, would have been impossible in England.

Our Conservative Ministry is declining towards an end; the mere anticipation of its fall naturally leads prudent politicians to begin withdrawing their support. On the other side the Gladstonians, having office in view, are becoming cautious in their promises—as we say here, they are hedging—and I prophesy that in the matter of Egypt they will prove no warmer advocates of evacuation than their predecessors. I am afraid that when such material interests are at stake a foreign nation would be disappointed if it supposed party-fencing to represent any earnest collision of opinions.

The Liberals were returned to power by the general election which took place soon afterwards, and there was a change at the India Office.

Before leaving town finally for his summer vacation, Lyall went by appointment to call on the new Secretary of State, Lord Kimberley, and all who knew that able and kindly man will recognise the picture—

Lord Kimberley . . . was very civil to me. . . . But he is celebrated for talking incessantly at official interviews instead of listening to the men he has sent for. . . . This he did to me, the subject being our Afghan situation, and the consequence was that by the time he slackened I had got tired with the effort of following his oration, and whenever I began to speak he recommenced. So I conveyed my views to him very imperfectly. . . . But he is evidently a strong man.

He was that, and much more besides; but he could not help talking. I remember going to see him on my return from a mission to Kabul a year or two later, and after my interview one of his colleagues in the Cabinet said to me, "Have you seen Lord Kim-

berley?" "Yes, I saw him yesterday." "And I suppose he told you all about Kabul and the Amir?" It was exactly what he had done, at considerable length. Yet I have been told, and can readily believe, that the India Office has not often had a better Secretary of State.

In August 1892 Lyall writes to John Morley—

Although we hold different opinions on the question of Irish Home Rule, I think we should find ourselves in virtual agreement on almost every other political question. However this may be, I feel so strong a private interest in your Ministerial success that I cannot help desiring it very sincerely.

About the same time he writes to Mrs Webb—

On Friday I went to the House of Commons,—the place was crowded beyond the memory of the oldest inhabitant—every gallery, every step and gangway—ambassadors packed like fish on their bench—peers and peeresses—poor little —— unable to get in, half crying at the door. In the midst uprose Gladstone, who made the speech you've read; very full and flexible voice, great dignity of attitude and gesture, and (to my mind) much force of argument. A very fine performance, worth witnessing. Balfour rose to reply—nervous and rather stumbling at first; a weak voice cracking with the strain of the situation—a contrast with the large, cool utterance that had just ceased. But he soon warmed to his argument, and looked very well—a light, active, fiery kind of spirit leading his men in serried ranks behind him. He attacked the Irishmen with gesture and word directly and very boldly, made a dashing speech full of fight and a kind of defiance. His argument I did not think strong—he denounced the Gladstonians as slaves of the Irish party, on whom their majority depends. True; but, as Gladstone said, you must take all together, and treat the majority as a whole,

as the verdict of the United Kingdom—you have 40 men against you and out you must go. If the Irish went over to the Tories, would the Tories in their turn be slaves? and so on.

It is an interesting and even amusing time. I dine to-night with Sydney Buxton; to-morrow with Leonard Courtney. Gladstone left the House after Balfour had been speaking about 15 minutes. Mrs G. was waiting for him outside, and they drove straight to the country. The Tories are making a great deal of this—say it is unheard of that a party leader should make his attack and not listen to the Chief's reply—discourteous to Balfour; great sign of physical weakness—how can he expect to lead the House? For my part, I think an old man of 83 who has just made a great effort may well be allowed to slip away quietly—but they give him no quarter.

One would think from this letter that Lyall's sympathies and reasoning were rather on the side of Home Rule; but it was not so, for the letter to John Morley which I have quoted above was dated eight days later. This tendency to see both sides of a question was characteristic of Lyall, and perhaps it was one of the reasons, besides his knowledge that he had no gift of oratory, which prevented him from ever trying to take an active part in political life. He could never have been a real party man; and it was well that he never had an inclination to come forward—for even if he had got into the House the life would not have suited a man of his temper.

CHAPTER XIV.

1893–1903.

'The Rise of the British Dominion in India'—Other literary work—Home Rule Bill of 1893—Disappointed of Viceroyalty—Serious illness—Folklore—Visit to The Hague—Jameson Raid—The Indian Frontier—Too old for Bombay Governorship—Second series of 'Asiatic Studies'—The Boer War—'Alfred Tennyson'—John Morley's appreciation—Privy Councillorship—Close of official career.

'THE Rise of the British Dominion in India' had been published; and in February 1893 Sir Thomas Wade, formerly British Minister at Pekin, wrote to Lyall of the "intense gratification" with which he had read it.

> Feeling keenly how much a work of the same kind on China is called for, yours fills me with envy. It is so comprehensive and clear, with, to my mind, the right measure of philosophy to be looked for in a treatise for the use of adult students; of a class of men who do not require to be lured by anecdote. I am glad to see that while you do splendid justice to Hastings and Wellesley, you do boldly mark also that which is censurable as violation of principle.

The book was in fact one of exceptional value; for it was full of careful thought, and brought out especially two broad facts which, though obvious

enough, had never till then been clearly enunciated or recognised. These were that the foundation of our dominion in India was superior sea power; and secondly, that, superior sea power once established, the extension of that dominion over the whole country was not fortuitous, but natural and almost inevitable. Lyall did not think much of the book himself. He sent me a copy of it with the words—

It is a mere historic sketch, on lines which might suit a much larger work, if any one found time to do it thoroughly. . . . You will have noticed that my point is to explain that the conquest of India was really a very easy business, and that the French were never "in it" seriously.

Sir Thomas Wade's letter was not the only proof given to Lyall at this time of the value attached to his literary work. At the end of April he received from Sir Thomas Sanderson[1] a letter of which the following is an extract:—

Lady Derby thinks it may interest and please you to hear that during the last few days of his illness Lord Derby, whose intellect remained clear and unclouded to the last, repeated to her by heart several of your poems. I daresay you know already that he admired them greatly, and said that they represented to perfection the local colour of India.

And a little later the great Jowett writes, in his minute and difficult hand, asking Lyall to visit Oxford. His letter finishes, apparently, with the words—

Let me tell you with what great interest during the last year I have read your book on Asiatic forms of religion: it

[1] Now Lord Sanderson.

seems to me the most instructive book on the subject that I have ever read, and the best calculated to make men realise the difference between Indian and Greek and European notions.

Lyall had been asked by Lord Goschen to give a course of five lectures on India before the London Society for the Extension of University Teaching; but this he found impossible owing to other engagements, and he was obliged to refuse also various requests for contributions to magazines and reviews; but he wrote for the April number of the 'Quarterly' an article which attracted considerable attention, on the Life and Speeches of Sir Henry Maine; and in 'The Edinburgh Review' of the same month appeared an article by him on the Colonial Policy of France. It was a subject in which he took much interest, though he feared that his knowledge of it was very incomplete.

During April he spent a week in Paris with Lord Dufferin, who spoke of his visit as "a delight," and wished it had been longer. Soon afterwards Lyall writes to M. de Kerallain—

La Manche isole, as you observe; nor do I as yet foresee any near prospect of a "rapprochement" between France and England. I was in Paris for a week or more last month, and I confess that your politicians did not exhibit any great increase of confidence in the friendly intentions of their neighbours with regard to the various points under discussion between us. You will remember that I prophesied to you, long ago, that in regard to the exodus from Egypt you would not find Gladstone more ready than Salisbury to play the part of Moses. In fact, the Jews, French and

English, are still bent on spoiling the Egyptians, as they were in more patriarchal days.

My sister sent to you, I believe, my little book on 'The Rise of the British Dominion in India.' I should be very glad if you were some day disposed to let me have your appreciation of its contents. I have given therein my view of the real situation of the French settlements in the last century, and of the true causes why the English power prevailed. I think that Dupleix has been too much magnified latterly, and that in the circumstances of that period the gallant attempt of a few Frenchmen to found a solid dominion in India were foredoomed to failure.

A letter to Mrs Webb, dated, after Lyall's manner, "Monday evening 7 P.M.," appears to refer to the introduction of the Home Rule Bill of 1893.

I went down to the House at 3 P.M. with Asquith, who took me in by the private entry, and I was just in time to secure my seat in the special gallery. The House was of course densely crowded. Chairs were ranged for the members on the floor of the House, and all the galleries were full. Gladstone came in precisely at 3.30, he began to speak at 3.45, and spoke exactly two hours. I could not follow him well, for after the first hour he was evidently losing strength, and his voice dropped in ending his sentences; but his opening was finely delivered, though not very powerful argumentatively. Lord C——, who was close to him, told me afterwards that Gladstone was very much "done," but his style and oratorical skill did not desert him. . . . When the speech was over I strolled about in the lobby outside, which was crammed with members eagerly discussing details. The impression seemed to be not particularly favourable, especially as to the provision whereby one set of Irish members are to form the Legislature in Dublin, and another to come over here to the Imperial Parliament. It was interesting to hear them all talking. It was said that the Parnellites accepted the measure, but that

the Ulster men are irreconcilable—that it will nevertheless pass somehow.

Later in the year Lord Roberts, who was about to deliver an address in Edinburgh, wrote to Lyall about it, and he replied in a letter from which I extract the following passages :—

It would be good to bring out clearly that Lord Dalhousie, in annexing Oudh, acted under the orders of the ENGLISH Government at home. I say this because the commonplace idea is that we Anglo-Indians have done all the annexations. . . . Certainly the annexation expedited the Mutiny, because so many of the sepoys were Oudh men, who had a kind of attachment to their own dynasty. . . . The short paragraph you propose about the quickness with which the population in the North-West fell into disorder and anarchy, might well be inserted. At Meerut not only the town roughs but the neighbouring villagers rushed together to plunder—especially the Goojurs, a wild cattle-stealing clan in those days. The truth is, that outside the towns the country-folk before the Mutiny were much in the old-fashioned half-barbarous condition that they had been in before we took those provinces—the traditions of fighting and looting were only dormant—and when law suddenly ceased, when the Government suffered sudden total eclipse, every one went his own way, took arms, and began to clear off old scores with his neighbours, especially money-lenders and land purchasers. In Bulandshahr the country was "up" within three days of the Meerut outbreak.

During this year Lyall, who had always studied colonial affairs, was interested in the organisation of an International Colonial Institute, which had been projected by M. Chailly Bert and others. The project was carried into effect, and with some success.

Altogether Lyall's life at this time was a full one; and he writes to Rivett-Carnac—

> The difference between official life in London and in India (even in Simla) is this, that in London one's business is only part of one's numerous avocations, whereas in India the office rules everything else. I don't mean that here all time outside office is devoted to society, though a great deal of it is; but there are all sorts of other calls upon one's time. I have never been busier than in London, though I have worked much harder in India.

Towards the close of the year he was made an Honorary Fellow of King's College, Cambridge, of which his old schoolfellow Whitting, with whom he had competed for the Newcastle forty-one years before, was then Vice-Provost. This was gratifying, but the year 1893 was now to bring him a great disappointment. Lord Lansdowne was about to retire from the Viceroyalty of India, and the Liberal Government was in considerable difficulties regarding the choice of a successor. No suitable peer or other person of note in England being ready to accept the post, it was decided that a man of Indian experience should be appointed; and Lyall naturally hoped that in these circumstances his claims would be thought as good as any. Eventually, however, the choice fell upon a distinguished Indian soldier, Sir Henry Norman, then Governor of Queensland, who at first accepted, but on reconsideration refused the offer. Norman was a man of the highest character, conscientious to a fault, and doubted whether at his age, sixty-seven, he could properly undertake to discharge for

five years the work of the Viceroyalty. The view taken about Lyall—a curiously mistaken view—was that he had not sufficient decision of character to make a good Viceroy. Lyall in action was a very different man from Lyall in the deliberations of Council. He had shown as ruler of a district, and of a province, that he could make himself respected and feared. However this may be, the end of it was that Lord Elgin consented to go out, and Lyall lost the chance of his life. He never complained, or allowed the matter to prey upon his spirits, but no doubt he felt deeply disappointed. Yet it was, possibly, fortunate for him that he did not get what he desired.

Early in the following year, 1894, Lyall writes to John Morley—

I heard yesterday evening that you would remain faithful to Ireland. . . . I would it had been otherwise; for we much need some one who can stand up effectually for India in the Commons. From the point of view of Indian politics, that exemption of cotton goods from the import duties is a serious concession to the self-interest of our people, which will do much to damage the confidence of the Indians in the English Government. I cannot believe that the manufacturers themselves are acting wisely for their own advantage. However, we all protested, vigorously and vainly, in our Council.

In May, Lecky writes to him regarding a new and enlarged edition of 'The British Dominion'—

Many thanks for the new edition. I have been reading the new chapter with deep admiration and agreement. Quite independently of all other considerations, your prose is a per-

petual pleasure to me, and I do not think any other of our time has a more enduring quality. I hope much more of it is to come.

Much was, in fact, being written in the shape of review articles, the 'Quarterly' having one on "History and Fable," and another on "Novels of Adventure and Manners," while others were being prepared. But towards the end of the year Lyall's literary work was interrupted by a serious illness. He had enjoyed and received benefit from a yachting tour with his friend Ralli in the Mediterranean; but in the course of the summer he was prostrated by a sharp attack of what afterwards turned out to be appendicitis, and at the end of the year he was obliged to undergo the then new operation, which, at his age, very nearly sixty, was a grave matter. He writes to his brother James in November—

Of course there is risk in this, but I am positively advised that it is the best course open to me. If I am lucky I shall not be on my back above three weeks, though it will take more time to get quite well. And I am prepared to face the other contingency.

Under the skilful hands of Sir Frederick Treves the operation was successful, "and," Lyall said, "Treves regards me contentedly as a bit of good work." But he remained ill some time; and in later years he used to say that if he had gone to the Cape or to New Zealand he would in all probability never have returned. As it was, though he lived many years longer, he had from this time to be careful about his health. I notice that in the course of this year

Lyall told Lord Roberts that he might some day undertake "a memoir of what he had seen and known during his Indian service." Later, when asked by a publisher to write a volume of reminiscences, he declined, and it does not seem that he ever seriously contemplated the work. As I have said before, he would have found himself at a disadvantage owing to his having omitted to keep a diary; and this consideration no doubt prevailed with him. But all who are interested in India must regret the loss.

Meanwhile he was much troubled about the position in Chitral, where our agent and a small body of troops had been shut up and besieged. Lyall thought we had mismanaged matters, and brought about trouble by our imprudence. The question was very fully discussed at the time, and there is no need to go into it all again. But Lyall and his brother, now returned from India, and Sir John Adye, did all they could to "check the flow of the Jingo tide" on which they considered Lord Curzon and others had embarked. Whether they were right in their views time alone can tell; but the upshot has been that until now the opposite policy has prevailed, and the country about Chitral has remained under our control.

He solaced himself, after his fashion, by reading philosophical works, and he writes to Mrs Webb about his favourite, Hume—

All philosophical writing (except Berkeley's) seems to me diffuse and confused after this,—any one can understand his arguments on the most profound subject, and he reasons so

closely that I doubt if he has ever been fairly met and beaten *on his own ground.* This does not mean that he was always right, far less that he settled everything.

But he goes on—

You need not be wishing that philosophy pleased you more —it is mostly a futile exercise, except when performed by the masters of the art, who are all in the end destructive. They tell you nothing, except that the Unknown Land is inaccessible, and Shakespeare knew as much as any of them. The great poets penetrate with divine vision through all these clouds, and a few lines give the ultimate ideas, mostly negative.

Lyall had now made the acquaintance of Edward Clodd, whose kindly hospitality he was to enjoy more than once at Aldeburgh, and had got into correspondence with him on the subject of Folklore.

It appears to me that what Folklore principally needs is the classification of its abundant material and steady guidance along certain main lines of research. I think you have indicated very well indeed the points upon which inquiries should be concentrated and the purposes which the science can promote. The investigation of all these primitive beliefs and practices throws new and strong light upon problems of intellectual development, and must have greatly changed the point of view from which certain theological questions are examined, because the study explains the growth of conceptions. But the science is apt to suffer from a plethora of undigested facts, so that any theory may be constructed by those who ingeniously pick out what they want from the heap. I am sometimes inclined to wish that your Society were empowered, like the Inquisition, to condemn and burn all vagrant heresies and speculations; and particularly to subject every new myth or story or custom reported

to you to a close scrutiny, for the purpose of ascertaining its true value. As soon as a European goes about among wild folk asking of their manners and customs, he gets all kind of absurd off-hand answers, which are duly noted.

In regard to the diffusion of folk tales, the missionaries are unconscious agents. They spread among savages the Bible stories, and are astounded when these are reproduced to them, with very quaint modifications, as tribal legends which indicate the survival of universal tradition. But no doubt this is very well known to you; though I am not sure whether every one appreciates the constant action and reaction upon each other of literature and legend in a country like India, where they flourish at the top and at the bottom of society respectively. Many of the myths and legends have percolated downwards—a few English story-books will set Cinderella and Jack the Giant-Killer afloat among the fabulists; and then comes the folklorist who is amazed at the similarities.

It was in this spirit that Lyall always attacked such questions; and the result was to make him very sceptical about certain views which were popular in England. Just as he had many years before broken a lance with Max Müller over the 'Science of Religion,' so he had afterwards subjected to close scrutiny the argument of that delightful book, the 'Golden Bough.' Theories, however charming, found in him a rather merciless critic. In the end he abandoned Folklore altogether. It was, he said, "a bewildering and fantastic pursuit."

In April 1895 he writes to Rivett-Carnac from Cobham—

I have been shut up in two upper chambers of my London house for almost the entire winter; nor did I see the outside of my front door for nearly three months until two days ago,

when I came down here to a house lent me by Mrs Charles Buxton. I have never been able to recover from the effect of an operation in December last, and even now I stir very seldom from a couch . . . the only consolation is, that it brings out the good-nature of my friends. . . . My India Office work has of course gone to pieces; yet I have been writing Notes about Chitral, and trying to ventilate my opinion that the whole business has come out of not keeping in order your ambitious political and military officers. They are very fine, plucky, keen-minded fellows; but they should not lead a great Government by the nose. However, the milk has been spilt (not to mention the blood), and there's no use crying over it.

Lyall was writing again for 'The Edinburgh Review.' It had now come into the hands of Mr Arthur Elliot, who had long collaborated with the late editor, Henry Reeve; and from this time onwards until the close of his life sixteen years later, Lyall's contributions to the Review were very frequent. In 1895 he contributed two articles, on "Twelve Years of Indian Government" and "The Life of Sir Bartle Frere."

In September 1895 he was at The Hague attending the meetings of the "Institut Colonial," and he writes to his brother—

We meet in a large official room, where speeches are made and papers discussed on colonial questions; the official language being French, I have not yet made any oratorical display. But my French enables me to understand very well what is said, and to me the debates are interesting, especially when the French members take part in it.

At that time the British Minister at The Hague was Sir Horace Rumbold, who came of an old Indian

family, and kindly received Lyall at the Legation, sparing him, as he said, the kind of trouble which often prevented him from touring — hotel life and guide-books. Lord Reay was also at The Hague, and Lecky, who had married a Dutch lady; so Lyall saw everything in the most favourable circumstances.

Altogether, in spite of his illness, the year was for Lyall a busy and interesting one. Though he regretted the overthrow of the Indian frontier policy which he believed to be right, and the sudden change of Government which took place at this time, he recognised that the verdict of the country was against his views.

I believe the country at large is just now in no humour to care about proclamations. "Go in and win, and damn the expense, especially Indian expense," is the general feeling. We are in the position of the Liberal party that tried to keep Lytton out of Afghanistan; only unluckily it is the beginning, not the close, of a Tory Government. There is nothing more to be said. . . . I suppose we must take our discomfiture as an ordinary incident of the parliamentary *régime*.

With reference to Lyall's illness, there is in the 'Life and Letters of Leslie Stephen' an interesting entry about him. Under date April 19, 1895, Stephen, who, it is said, often repeated with enthusiasm some of his verses, writes as follows:—

'Eastern Studies' is, I think, the most interesting work of the kind I ever read. . . . When I came back from America last time I made a reputation on board by reciting one of his poems, "Theology in Extremis," at a sort of penny reading. . . . I have never been the object of so many attentions

before or since, and gave my autograph to a dozen ladies. However, independently of that, Lyall is a man worth knowing, and unluckily so popular in society that I don't often get a chance of seeing him. So I have gained by his illness.

What Leslie Stephen wrote was very true. Lyall at this time thoroughly enjoyed London society, and was to be seen everywhere. The following letter, written to me after his death by Lady Lyttelton, explains with a woman's insight the secret of his personal charm—

The world seems so much duller without him. He was one of the rarest spirits, and the profoundest mind I have ever known, and yet—such a "pal," such a companion. Though he seemed to bring all the wisdom of the ages to illuminate anything he discussed, however small and human, however fundamental and insoluble,—yet there was an undying youthfulness and quickness of mind, the readiest laugh, the most sensitive sympathy, moments of boyish impatience and generous impulsiveness, an unfailing response to the adventurous or heroic. All these things in personal converse with him contrasted delightfully with the restraint, the fastidiousness, the caution of his writings, and indeed of his conduct of life as a whole.

The year 1896 opened inauspiciously with the Venezuela trouble, and the defeat of Jameson's force in the Transvaal. Lyall writes to his brother from Cannes—

Like yourself, I am troubled by all these complications abroad—indeed, they are never out of my head, and disturb my mind perpetually. The Americans mean mischief; they will do their best to humiliate us; and if we are not skilful as well as resolute they will succeed. . . . Then the Transvaal business, bad enough anyhow, is worse, to my mind,

after Jameson's failure. Here have we again got ourselves thrashed by these Boers, who trampled on the English flag in 1881, and have ever since treated the Colonial Englishman with contemptuous arrogance.

What was lacking on that border was a strong political agent to prevent outbreaks, and to insist on the settlement by Imperial mediation of the disputes between Boers and Uitlanders.

Early in 1896 Lyall was writing to M. de Kerallain about Buckle, whose method he regarded as inadequate and somewhat obsolete—

For myself I have always felt a prejudice against this author, as being the type of men who work in a library, surrounded by books, out of which they extract and co-ordinate the facts required for some theory. It was I who suggested to Maine the unsoundness of Buckle's deduction of various social and philosophical characteristics of the Indian people from the assumption that they generally fed on rice. . . . There is another similar generalisation of Buckle's which is equally wrong. He says . . . that "according to the principles laid down" the deification of mortals could not be expected in a tropical climate; and that therefore it is natural that this should form no part of the ancient religion of the Hindus. But the Hindu religion, ancient and modern, is full of such deifications; nor is any religion, except perhaps Islam, free from them.

Lyall's distrust of "theory-mongers," as John Morley called them, was no doubt legitimate; but it may be remarked, though the remark hardly applies to Buckle, that a writer in England has often no resource but to work in a library, surrounded by books, and draw deductions therefrom. The misfortune is that too often the men who are thrown

into contact with facts are, for one reason or another, unable to make use of their opportunities for recording and analysing those facts, and are apt to leave the theory-mongers a clear field. During a large part of his life Lyall was specially fortunate in having a certain amount of leisure. He used his leisure exceptionally well; but in India Englishmen are so few in number that most of them are habitually overworked, and have none.

Lord Roberts was now bringing out his book, 'Forty-one Years in India,' and, like many other distinguished men, he consulted Lyall freely about many points on which his knowledge of India and its people, and of Indian Foreign Policy, was of special value. Among the letters from Lyall which Lord Roberts has kindly placed at my disposal I find a considerable number written at this time,—letters full of thoughtful criticism and suggestion. The two differed in their views about a variety of matters,—for example, about the vexed question of Chitral; but each sincerely respected the opinion of the other, and their old standing friendship was increased rather than diminished by their discussion of such debatable points.

This was Lyall's way, as I had good reason to know. He opposed my own views on some questions; but his criticisms and arguments, though at times pointed, were invariably friendly and fair.

Early in 1897 I returned to England for a few months' leave, after two years' absence in Persia, and found that the Indian frontier question had reached

an acute stage. The tribes were giving serious trouble, and much discussion was going on about the reasons for their hostility. As showing Lyall's views on the subject I quote a letter which he wrote to me later in the year, when our troops had been forced to advance into the Afridi country. It shows also the charming, almost amusing, politeness with which he would always treat opinions which he did not share, even those of a former subordinate.

Lord George's speech[1] was excellent; he left himself plenty of latitude; and I think affairs are now on the right course so far as they can be in a situation where to advance or stand still is equally difficult, while it was, as I quite agree with you, impossible to go backwards.

With regard to your letter about the Russian question—You are too well versed in diplomatic matters to believe that Russia is deliberately meditating an invasion of India, or even a crossing of the Oxus, without very good and solid reasons. I know your view to be that we should gradually establish ourselves in the tribal mountain-belt, to be prepared for eventualities—but I would ask you to consider that this system of steady pushing forward into those highlands plays right into the hands of the thoroughgoing military party, who wish to seize the whole country once for all. The tribes understand the system as well as we do ourselves—what we call gradual, they call stealthy; they are easily convinced that we are sapping their independence, and that unless they combine to resist our politic method of establishing ourselves inside their country, they are lost. This was *undoubtedly* the feeling that lay at the bottom of the present rising, inflamed of course by fanaticism. Then comes a fight; and the thorough militaire gets his opportunity of pointing out

[1] Lord George Hamilton was then Secretary of State for India.

that unless we subdue the tribes and disarm them completely we shall have all our work to do over again,—and he is right, bar financial and political objections connected with India itself, of which the army takes no note. I am inclined to implore you, who take a larger survey of the situation, to look all round before you throw all your very material influence upon the side of gradual advance—except upon lines, like the Khyber and one or two others, that may be absolutely necessary. Wherever you set up posts you are forced to occupy and administer a considerable space all round you, and that leads to sure complications. This is why I was dead against the Chitral route from Peshawar—in which I think events have justified me. I hear that military men in India now want to abandon that route, and to concentrate troops on their real front, toward Kabul and Ghazni, wherein from the strategical standpoint I quite agree with them.

This war is a great political calamity; I am told that all our Mahometans in the north of India are sympathising with the tribes, who have certainly not got the worst of it thus far; though of course they will soon give in. The Amir will be stronger than ever, and if he lives will soon pose as the champion of Islam, with a formidable prestige in our territory, which will make him more intractable than ever in his dealings with us.

I won't write any more just now; I wish you'd run up to see me some time next week—on Tuesday or Thursday about 3 P.M. for choice. Always yours very sincerely.

Similar views were expressed in letters to others.

This North-West Frontier war [he writes to Rivett-Carnac] is a great political misfortune. The Government of India has been listening too long to military advisers, and is now stumbling heavily over the forward policy, which has had a rapid fall in the political market, and will give much trouble to the Ministry when Parliament meets.

There was, in fact, one of those sudden gusts of feeling on the subject which are characteristic of our Parliamentary system, and much discussion in the newspapers and elsewhere; but after that matters settled down. It was too late to reverse a policy which had been forced upon us by circumstances, and was in reality the outcome of our occupation of the Punjab fifty years before. From the first we had been obliged to insist upon our right to deal direct with the tribes upon our border, and as far as possible to exclude Afghan interference in their affairs. From that to some measure of control was an almost inevitable step. But Lyall was no doubt right in urging caution and abstention from unnecessary increase of responsibilities.

The war brought to him a keen personal disappointment. The letter to me from which I have quoted opens with a reference to his son, who had been prevented from joining in the storm of Dargai—

> Poor Bob has been lying for a month in the Peshawar hospital prostrate with fever caught during his long stay in that crowded fort at Jamrud. He writes in the greatest distress and disappointment—we hear that he has at last been discharged, and sent to pick up strength at Rawalpindi. In spite of all the risks, I am much troubled at his ill-luck, for he will never have again such a chance as he has lost by not being with the Gordon Highlanders in that brilliant action of the 20th, his birthday.

That was characteristic of Lyall. Remembering his own experiences, he had hoped the boy would see

active service, and his regret at the mischance was unfeigned. This feeling of sympathy for soldiers, and admiration for their deeds, was with him to the end of his life. I remember his cutting out from a newspaper, and showing to me, a short time before his death, a quotation from one of Henry Newbolt's poems—

> "Qui procul hinc, the legend's writ,
> The frontier grave is far away,
> Qui ante diem periit
> Sed miles, sed pro patriâ."

He had forgotten where the extract came from, but greatly admired it, and asked me whether I knew.

With all his dislike for a military policy in frontier affairs he never had a touch of the bourgeois dislike for soldiers. Ever since his Mutiny days, when he had seen the courage and self-devotion of our officers and men, the profession of arms had been in his eyes "the most honourable of all."

Meanwhile his literary life was going on as usual. An admirable article in the January number of the 'Edinburgh' on Lord Roberts' book had begun the year. There was another in July, on the Origin of Primitive Religions. In October there was a third, on Tennyson. He was asked by one publisher to write his recollections of men and things in India. Another asked him, most judiciously, to write a life of Lord Clive. A third asked for a volume on the Mutiny. He was also writing the chapter on India for the Cambridge Press History.

In June he writes to John Morley—

I am much pleased that you have paid me the compliment of sending me a copy of your Romanes Lecture, which I have read, of course, with the keen interest that attaches to all your studies of history. Machiavelli lived in a time when all the Italian states were incessantly in what Hobbes has called "a posture of war"; they were contending for existence, and their statesmen subordinated political morality to the instinct of self-preservation. This is briefly, I suppose, the best excuse for his doctrines.

I quite agree with your suggestion at the bottom of page 39—the most of the wars of faith have been conducted on maxims of policy, at any rate by the leaders.

The year was greatly saddened for Lyall by the death of his sister, Mrs Webb, who had been with him in India. To Lord Tennyson, who had a warm regard for her, he wrote: "She was my most intimate companion and correspondent for many years; her loss is to me irreparable." She was, perhaps, more like him in character than any other member of his family, and could sympathise keenly with all his varying moods. No one else was ever able to take her place.

The year 1898 shows again a considerable output of literary work. An article in 'The Nineteenth Century' on Louis XV. appeared in April, when also he was considering an article on Thackeray for the 'Edinburgh,' which appeared in October. In the following month appeared an article on the Theological Situation in India in the 'Fortnightly.' Throughout, offers of other literary work were being pressed upon him; and in June of this year

he was awarded a silver medal by the Society of Arts for a paper on "Chartered Companies and Colonisation." It is in fact impossible to follow all the threads of Lyall's literary activity, for as I have said he kept no diary, nor did he even keep an accurate list of his writings. A chance allusion in a letter is often the only clue to an article of considerable interest; and, no doubt, in spite of much search among masses of proofs and rough notes and scrapbooks, I have missed some papers which he wrote.

In July 1898 Lyall writes to Mrs Neville Lyttelton —Colonel Lyttelton was going on service—

> I wish you well and happily through this last week before your husband's departure; after all, the roving Englishman is the salt of English land, and one lives strenuously in the pain and pleasure of the outward-bound farewell and the homeward return. There is still a ring of poetry to be brought out of these things.

For himself, though "tired of life in jungle and tent," he was as incapable as ever of remaining a month or two in one place; and the comments in his letters upon the uniformity and monotony of ordinary existence in England are very frequent. To the end, even when weakened by ill health and the burden of years, there was in him the old impatience of inaction. He could not sit still, mentally or bodily.

Nor could he help at times wishing for more active employment abroad. He writes to Sir West Ridgeway, then in Ceylon—

I ought to have written to you again some time ago, for I really value your friendship and desire to keep up our correspondence. . . . It may sound barbarous, yet I myself can say honestly that my regrets are never for the many pleasant years that might have been passed in England and *were* passed in India; on the contrary, I am often looking back with regret that I did not see more of Asia and things and ideas Asiatic. And though I have now had ten very cheerful years in London, I have constantly twinges about not having gone to the Colonies when I might have so done.

The following year opened pleasantly for him. His younger son and daughter had both returned from India, and he was happy in seeing them again. There was at this time some possibility of his being sent out as Governor to Bombay; but he was now sixty-four, an age which was held to disqualify him, and the place went to Lord Northcote. He was not really disappointed, for he was now thoroughly at home in England, and, except for the Viceroyalty, would have left the country with reluctance. From this time forward he knew that his day for active service was over, and he resigned himself without complaint to the close of that chapter of his life. There remained always his Councillor's work in the India Office, where his opinion carried great weight; and, what he enjoyed much more, literature. He had consented early in this year to deliver lectures at Oxford on "India during the Queen's Reign," and he was writing for the 'Edinburgh' upon Anglo-Indian novelists, and was again being pressed to write his reminiscences, and articles on Indian frontier policy. Finally, he was as usual being consulted by all sorts and con-

ditions of men. For example, Lord Northbrook was writing a pamphlet, and sent it to him in proof for criticism during his summer holidays. He criticised carefully, and the result was the following—

MY DEAR LYALL,—Here is the first part of my pamphlet rearranged in consequence of your suggestions. I think it reads better. Pick some more holes if you have leisure and inclination.—Yours very truly, NORTHBROOK.

The quantity of this kind of work which Lyall good-naturedly performed—it is a troublesome and often a thankless kind of work—was very considerable. I have known him read carefully, and criticise at length, a whole volume of verse or prose sent to him by an inexperienced author, devoting to it many hours of labour; and to spend many more in preparing a careful address to an audience of school-girls. In patient kindness of this sort he was really admirable.

At this time he was bringing out the second volume of his 'Asiatic Studies,' and they were to be translated into French by M. de Kerallain, with whom he was in correspondence, on this subject and others. I extract from his letters the following criticism of a notable Indian novel:—

A novel written two or three years ago by Mrs Flora Steel called 'On the Face of the Waters' had an extraordinary success. The story is of the Sepoy Mutiny in Northern India, and the siege of Delhi. My own admiration of the book is moderate; yet it is well worth reading, because Mrs Steel has a close knowledge of the manners and life of the lower classes in India, and has studied carefully at first hand her scenes and some of her characters. But she also undertakes to

impress upon the reader very distinct conclusions upon political and military questions—such as, whether the General who commanded at Meerut when the first regiments mutinied and fled to Delhi, was or was not an imbecile for his behaviour in that crisis. I need hardly warn you against yielding to the ardour with which a lady plunges into such controversies.

In the course of the year he received the following letter from the present Archbishop of Canterbury :—

MY DEAR SIR ALFRED,—It happens that the Bishop of Durham and I—with possibly the Bishop of Oxford—are dining to-night quite alone and in a humble way in our rooms at Lambeth Palace (Lollards' Tower) at 8 P.M. The Bishop of Durham, whose keen and lifelong interest in India you wot of, tells me how exceedingly anxious he is to see you, and how he would value the chance of a talk with you. He has 'Asiatic Studies' at his finger ends. He leaves London to-morrow, and such a chance may not come again, so, on the barest chance that you may be free, I send this note at a venture, to say how we should welcome you. Don't dress unless you like (we are humble folk in the Lollards' Tower), and expect frugal fare. No answer required, come if you can. But it would rejoice me beyond measure to see you and Bishop Westcott in conversation. . . . .—Ever yours,

RANDALL WINTON.

The invitation was accepted, for I find written across the top of it in Lyall's hand, "Dined with the three Bishops in the Tower. A.C.L." The Archbishop writes that he remembers it well, and that Bishop Westcott and Lyall sat on till nearly 2 A.M.

I sat by as an eager learner and listener, while the two prophets interchanged their thoughts on the fundamental and characteristic elements of Indian life and history. They were far less in disagreement than most outside critics would

have expected. They had the advantage at the outset of being, each of them, fairly familiar with the other's writings. . . . Surely Sir Alfred was one of the small class who possess the rare gift of genuinely understanding the position of those from whom they differ fundamentally with respect to the ultimate "sanctions" of human life.

And the Archbishop speaks of the "combined respect and affection" with which Lyall was regarded by him.

The year ended sadly for all Englishmen, with the early defeats of the Boer war; and Lyall felt them acutely. He had in some measure apprehended defeat at first, for he knew that we were not nearly as strong in numbers as we ought to have been, and that the Boer in his own country would be a formidable enemy. Also his experience of war in Afghanistan had taught him that regular troops acting against large numbers of irregulars, who fought on a wholly different system, were apt at first to find themselves in difficulties. But like the rest of us, he had not expected such serious blows as we received, and they were never out of his mind. His earnest desire from the beginning was that the great capacity of Lord Roberts might be utilised; and the news that Lord Roberts was in fact going out to take command relieved his anxiety. From that time forward he felt confident of the issue. But, as he wrote to John Morley, "In any case, we must face misfortunes 'in the high Roman fashion.'"

Lyall's correspondence in 1900 was, as usual, varied and interesting. The position in Persia had been complicated by the return to power of the late

Atabeg Azam, a very masterful Prime Minister, and by his influence over the Shah. As British Minister at Tehran, I received from Lyall valuable information and help in dealing with the situation, which was difficult, for a variety of reasons into which it is not necessary to enter now. At the same time he was corresponding with Lord Tennyson, who was then in Australia, upon the subject of the natives, and the progress of the Australian Federation scheme, and the South African war. In the progress of the war Lyall had, at the moment, a personal as well as a patriotic interest, for his eldest son, following the family tradition, had joined the East Kent Imperial Yeomanry, and gone out to see some active service. Lyall took the view of the war which was generally taken by Liberals.

In reality X's diplomacy landed us twelve months ago in a costly and dangerous adventure, very badly begun, out of which he was extricated by Roberts and the sheer fighting strength of the British army. I am altogether of opinion that a war with the Boers had become inevitable, but it might have been managed in a very different fashion. However, the British nation does not care what scrapes it is run into, so long as we fight our way out of the mess heroically; and in this general election the Ministry are sure of a triumph, if only there is no alternative before the country, for the Liberals are in the same hopeless state of disorganisation as they were just 100 years ago, in the great French war time. . . .

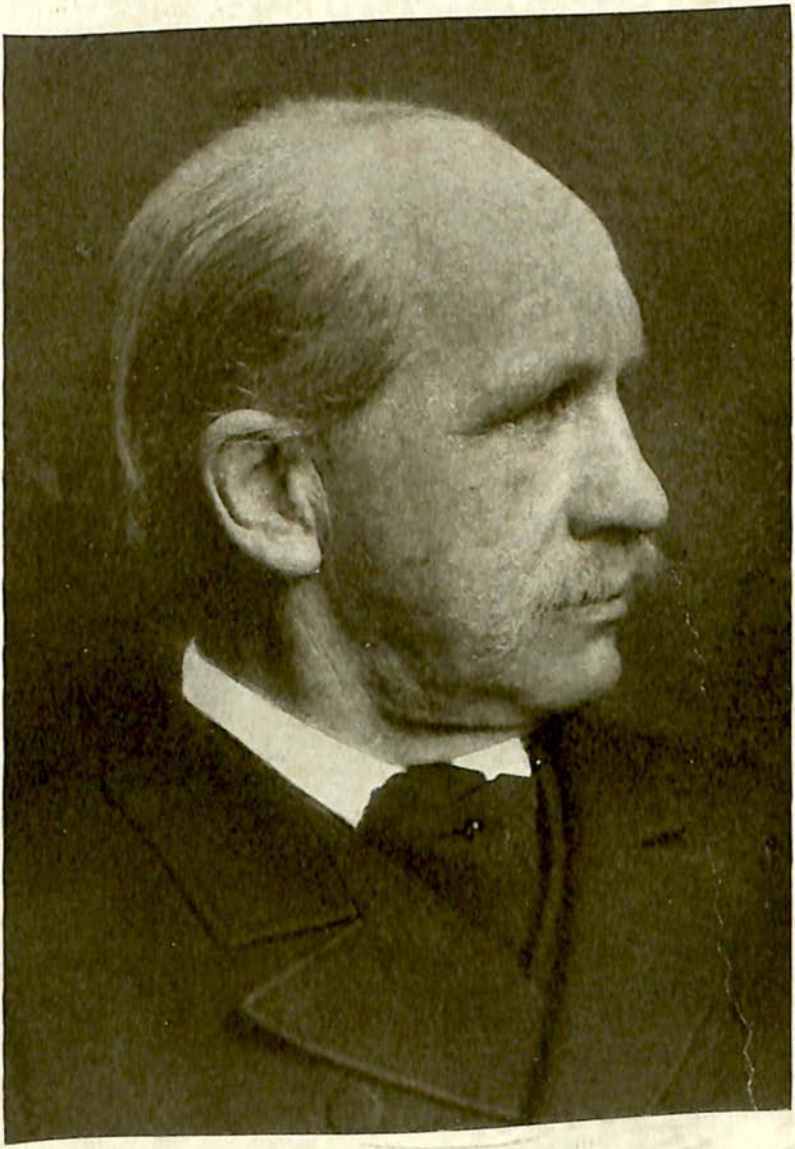
I met Lord Cromer last week, and had long talks over Oriental politics, of which his fifteen years in Egypt have given him great knowledge. There never was a time of

greater demand for able administrators in all parts of the Empire, for our Imperial responsibilities are multiplying fast. . . . When one has once taken a hand in the world's affairs, literature is like rowing in a picturesque reach of the Thames after a bout of the open sea. I myself have returned to port, and have no wish to put out again.

Literature was, in fact, occupying him at this time to an increasing degree. His papers show many applications made to him for articles and books on various subjects, and he was writing steadily. He contributed during the year an article on Heroic Poetry to the new 'Anglo-Saxon Review,' one on Brahminism to 'The North American Review,' one on Byron to the 'Edinburgh,' for which he was also working at a paper on the works of Leslie Stephen. And some previous articles of his were being translated in the 'Revue Britannique.' He was also interesting himself in the Literary Society, in the Synthetic Society, and, as ever, in all the best books of the day, English and French. Altogether, his quiet "reach of the Thames" afforded him constant occupation and pleasure.

To Lord Cromer, who had given him to read the proofs of a contemplated book on Egypt, with a modest inquiry whether he "had gone wrong on any big point," Lyall writes—

To my mind it is an excellent and valuable record of remarkable work, and especially of experiences and impressions gathered during long residence in Egypt during an extraordinary period of its history. What strikes me, as a general observation, is that the Oriental question is much the same everywhere; the same or similar problems present



ABOUT 1900.

themselves, and especially the European protectorate over an Eastern state involves the same political and military difficulties everywhere. If some Roman proconsul had written a memoir on your lines, I guess that it would have described a situation very little different. . . . But the whole of your disquisition on the state of society, and the condition, moral and material, of the various classes in Egypt, is full of that kind of sound knowledge and insight that grows ripe only on the tree of personal knowledge and long study at first hand. . . .

Your description of the machinery of Government and of the judicial system is very instructive, especially to those who know something of such experiments; and the wonder is that such a complicated mechanism has worked at all; but with the power to move the wheels almost any car can be driven. The Frenchman's share in the performance reminds me of the quill-driver in Voltaire's 'Candide': "Le plumitif lui dit: Je suis sans crédit pour faire du bien; tout mon pouvoir se borne à faire du mal quelquefois." I am sure it is eventually well worth publication.

This was the foundation of Lord Cromer's 'Modern Egypt,' which appeared some years later.

In this year, 1900, appeared Morley's 'Cromwell,' and Lyall writes to him—

It was a great pleasure to receive your book on 'Cromwell,' from the author. All that you write is read by me diligently; and I am already some way through your volume, being particularly interested in observing how you, who began by dealing with the men of ideas, are now taking up the men of action. Thus far, at any rate, have you now come into accord with the temper of these times, although I know that you, like myself, hold to the opinion that the English folk have been swept too far by that stream of rash energetic activity which is commonly termed Imperialism.

Yet the main difference is that whereas formerly we did our Imperialism quietly, so that people hardly knew what they were about, we now proclaim it upon the housetops.

I fancy that I notice in your present book indications that you are inclined to be less severe on Strafford than I should be, for to my mind the unscrupulous despotism with which he governed Ireland as Lord Deputy was the direct cause of that bloody rebellion (1641) which did so much to ruin the country. On the other hand, I question whether the shooting of Lucas and Lisle at Colchester can fairly be termed "a piece of savagery" (p. 118). When a country has been generally pacified after a long war, those who take the lead in a fresh and hopeless outbreak must expect to pay for it with their lives; and Lucas had surrendered at an earlier date on condition of never bearing arms again against the Parliament. I much hope that your speaking power has benefited by the rest you have taken, and that you are generally very well. We must endeavour to meet when you return to London.

He received about the same time a letter regarding one of his own contributions to history which, coming from a man whose historical writings are famous,[1] is of special value—

Your 'British Dominion in India,' which I have now finished, has interested me extremely. Indeed, if you will allow me to say so, I do not remember to have come across a book which contains so concise an account of a mass of facts, so complicated as to breed confusion in most minds, connected and interpenetrated by so many weighty reflections. One would have to go outside our tongue or our time to find parallels.

As you tell me it has not sold very widely, the cause of

[1] The Right Hon. James Bryce, O.M.

this would seem to lie in the merits that have struck me, the conciseness which strains the attention of an average languid or hasty reader (as most men are), and the reflections which give the book the character rather of a philosophical study than of a narrative. You are almost austere in your exclusion of the juicy parts of history, and of the dilutions which the modern reader is accustomed to. You nowhere condescend to his liking for picturesque descriptions of events, and very seldom even to the demand for the characterisation of distinguished men. If you were re-writing the book it might perhaps appeal more to the "general reader" if this severe restraint were relaxed, and you were to let yourself go here and there in descriptive passages. But as regards the serious student, you give him, as it seems to me, exactly what he wants, and cannot (so far as I know) find in any other book about India.

I am interested in noticing that you remark on the parallel (which struck me when I visited Armenia twenty-four years ago) between its position between the Roman and Persian empires and that of Afghanistan.

What will be the future of the British Empire in India? It is a wholly abnormal phenomenon, is it not? The strangest things do happen—though, as you have admirably explained, the conquest of India by a few English was not so very strange—but they do not stay for ever the same. We are changing the conditions which made our conquest easy: will the new conditions make retention easy?

I hope we may have another Sunday soon together to discuss these matters.

There is nothing to show what Lyall's answer was, but his views on this question are indicated in many passages of his letters. He never doubted that our policy with regard to the education of the natives of India, and in other respects, must have the effect of increasing the difficulties of our

position; but he did not think that this consideration would justify us in adopting an opposite policy. Most Englishmen would say the same. And whatever may be thought hereafter of our wisdom, it will hardly be denied that in deliberately giving to the natives of the country what we believed to be best for them, regardless of the consequences, we showed some unselfishness.

In 1901 Lyall undertook a book on Tennyson for the "English Men of Letters" series. About this he writes to Lord Tennyson—

I have imposed on myself, as I anticipated, an arduous task in undertaking to write a serial volume upon your father; for the work of reviewing his poetry has been often done before, and by better hands than mine; while for the incidents and course of his life I am entirely dependent on your Memoir. You will not, however, I trust, disapprove of my pail being let down in your pond, suitable acknowledgments being always made to the proprietor. In regard to the words that you have written to me about the Idylls, I confess that I do not myself rank them so high as his very best poems, on the ground, which you will probably consider inconclusive, that the lofty ideal necessarily involves a kind of anachronism; yet I fully appreciate the admirable execution of a very difficult theme. But I am only at the beginning of my essay. It is a serious drawback that I am prevented from consulting you and obtaining any fresh material that you might be disposed to let me see, if you were now in England.

I have been in Scotland for about six weeks. I went to see Lady Curzon for a day or two at Braemar, before her return to India; and I met there George Brodrick. After returning to London I ran down to Winchester, and marched in the procession to the Alfred statue, where we had a fine address from Lord Rosebery, and a benediction from the

Bishop of Winchester. It was a very fair gathering of representative men, from the Universities, and from various towns. . . .

Then I came here (Milford House, Godalming) to see poor Godfrey Webb, who is slowly declining towards his end. . . . Yesterday I was on the Hind Head with Frederick Pollock, and we looked across to the Black Down, with friendly recollections of you and Lady Tennyson.

The war in South Africa trails on dismally, with depressing vicissitudes of fortune; and the nation watches the course of events ruefully, seeing no remedy but perseverance to the end. . . .

To another friend Lyall had written earlier of

the fine spirit which, so far as I have seen, animates the women whose stake in this war is far heavier than that which is risked by the men. . . . With regard to ——'s picture of Englishmen going to the front, you will remember that I have always maintained that only those who go out of this civilised country, to see the rough work on the frontiers and in the farlands, properly understand what our men are like, and can do.

Shortly afterwards Lyall was asked, and consented, to represent the Government of India in the course of the following spring at the Congress of Historic Sciences which was to be held in Rome. At this time he was apparently in excellent health and spirits, and was getting through with enjoyment a number of visits and social engagements which strikes one as portentous. He was welcome not only among students and men of letters and bishops, but to a remarkable degree among women of the more intellectual kind, who did their best to spoil him. Perhaps he would have been more than human if he had not been a

little flattered by the attentions heaped upon him. It says much for the steadiness of his head that he remained throughout so unassuming in his manners, and so perfectly free from any touch of conceit.

I have said that he had kept no diary. It is true that here and there among his note-books and papers I have come upon a few occasional jottings in diary form; but they are very few, and of no use for showing the course of his life. Now, at sixty-seven years of age, when his official service was practically at an end, he began to mend his ways in this respect, and for each of the remaining years of his life there is a small diary volume. But even now it is a very imperfect record, a 'Pocket Diary and Almanac' with a space of about an inch and a half allotted to each day, and that space often left empty, or showing such entries as "Tring. Hard frost," and the like. Occasionally one finds a note of the names of some fellow-guests at a dinner or country-house visit, but very rarely indeed any expression of opinion or other interesting matter; and it is evident from the entries that he used often to make them half a dozen at a time, several days after the proper date. Anything less complete or methodical cannot be imagined. It was not in him to take the trouble of keeping up a regular daily record, nor was he inclined to attach over-much importance to anything he did; and his natural reserve no doubt prevented much revelation of his inner thoughts and feelings. Still, the little careless volumes are of some use, as showing that he was at this time enjoying a varied round of

life. He would perhaps begin the day with breakfast at Grillion's, and a talk with Sir Redvers Buller about military matters, or at the Breakfast Club—"Lord Reay, Mackenzie Wallace, Grant Duff, Sir George Trevelyan, Leonard Courtney." Then would come the India Office; lunch with some friend; a meeting of the Athenæum Club Committee, or of the board of Governors of Dulwich School, or of the Central Asian Society; perhaps a call or two; dinner out almost invariably, unless he was receiving friends at home; after dinner a game of cards, or an evening at the Literary Society or the Synthetic Society, or occasionally a theatre. The country visits were innumerable. And through it all, somehow, ran a thread of literary work.

In 1902 was published his volume on 'Alfred Tennyson,' which must have meant much hard, though pleasant labour. The book was well received, but I cannot find in Lyall's diary, or elsewhere, anything to show that he was pleased at the result. Yet it must have greatly pleased him to receive such an appreciation as the following from John Morley, who had induced him to write the book, and to whom he submitted the proofs.

MY DEAR LYALL,—I have read the book with real delight. It is a true masterpiece, and shows that only a poet can judge a poet with true inward feeling and effect. It is absolutely free from the defects that disfigure nine criticisms out of ten. It is just, it is respectful and appreciative, it is full of poetic and meditative charm of its own, it is suffused with a continuous and enchanting Tennysonian atmosphere.

I am full of admiration and pleasure, and this I say in all humility and all sincerity.

I have made a few trivial jottings, which I could go through orally better than in writing. I shall be in town to-morrow (Friday). You would find me at the Club at 10-11. Or at 3.30, if you be so kind as to drop me a card there.

With cordial felicitations.—Ever yours, J. M.

A few days later Morley writes again—

It is weak and "ower-blate" and not harmonious to say "it is the writer's opinion." —— them all, if it is your opinion, that's enough to make it a truth for downright dogmatic assertion for all time.

The thing is a delicate, strong, subtle, deep, and delightful piece of work, and there's no more to be said.

Shortly before this, in June, Lyall had been made a Privy Councillor, which, Morley wrote, was "still a real honour to a man who is known to have well earned it." Lyall's diary for the 25th June has the entry, "Nearly 70 letters of congratulation. Answered 40." The honour marked the approach of Lyall's retirement from official service, for his long term as a member of the Indian Council was drawing to a close. It did not actually come to an end for some months more, but Lyall wrote to Lord Roberts—

Your kindly letter was most welcome, for our acquaintance began in the earliest years of my Indian service, and I may regard you as one of my oldest friends. I am quite content to leave the Indian Council, for in truth I am rather tired of official harness—it is full time that I should make way for younger men; and there are other things which may give me occupation.

One of these things was a Life of Lord Dufferin, which, at Lady Dufferin's request, he had now undertaken to write. In the early part of October he went over to Clandeboye, and began work upon the papers.

But before this I find him writing to Lord Tennyson from Mr Arthur Elliot's house at Freshwater Bay, which he had taken for two months—

Very many thanks for your friendly congratulations on my Privy Councillorship, which is a great honour that was quite unexpected by me. I can now sing my "Nunc Dimittis" from official life, for my membership of the Indian Council ends with this year; and I shall gladly slip off the official harness that I have worn so many years, with the task of compiling Lord Dufferin's biography to occupy me for some years to come.

My small volume on your father's life and works is ready for publication, and I believe it will appear by this month's end. . . . I have some hope that you may like it; for John Morley has been unusually complimentary to me upon the work; whereby I was much reassured, as I had found it to be a difficult subject to treat adequately, when so much has been already said by very competent writers upon the poems; and, as you have said, it is in his poetry that we must look for the chronicle of Tennyson's life.

Lyall had been, in fact, very diffident about his book. He writes to one of his cousins, the Countess Martinengo Cesaresco[1]—

I have little confidence in the success of my work. I have given my own ideas freely, and it must take its chance.

[1] The well-known authoress.

That was Lyall's way, and no doubt Morley's cordial words were a great help to him. In the same spirit he writes to M. de Kerallain—

I have agreed, after much hesitation, upon Lady Dufferin's request, to write Lord Dufferin's biography. I have never before attempted a work of this kind, so that I am in much doubt whether I can accomplish it adequately.

His diffidence about his books before they appeared, which was no affectation, made him perhaps appreciate all the more any commendation which they received; and the same letter has the following passage—

And perhaps I may add, to my own glorification, that a friend recently heard the 'Asiatic Studies' quoted by a missionary preacher in the Cathedral of Notre Dame at Paris.

Lyall's literary work at this time was not confined to his Tennyson and his beginning of Lord Dufferin's biography, for he was contributing to the centenary number of 'The Edinburgh Review' an article on English and Russian Relations, which the Editor declares to be "excellent." He adds—

The 'Review,' however, owes you thanks for services very far beyond those you have rendered to the present number; for you have helped for many years now to keep up to a very high level the political and literary side of the 'Review.'

And an article on "Race and Religion" appeared in the 'Fortnightly' for December, which the Editor, W. L. Courtney, regarded with "warm admiration." The article was an amplification of a lecture delivered

a few months before at University College. At the same time, I believe (but others besides Alfred Lyall had the sinful habit of not dating their letters) he was asked to act as President of the Literary Fund.

I had hoped in the course of this year to receive Lyall at Madrid, where I was then occupying the Embassy, for he wished to see again the place he had last seen as a boy. The visit fell through on account of the Coronation; but I was in London in the course of the early summer, and received a kindly welcome from him. Physically he had now begun to show some signs of age; his eyes had lost much of their old fire, and he had grown more gentle in manner. Though he seemed as bright and keen in mind as ever, he spoke doubtfully about Lord Dufferin's Life; and altogether he gave me for the first time the impression that he was growing a little worn and tired.

Lyall began the year 1903 by a visit to Mr and Mrs Henry White of the American Embassy, with whom he was for some years on very intimate terms; and at their hospitable home, Wilton Park, he spent his sixty-eighth birthday. He had returned only a few days before from a Christmas visit to his friends the Spencer Walpoles.

On the 13th of January 1903 he attended his last Council at the India Office. Three days later he notes, after his curt matter-of-fact way—

> This day my fifteen years tenure of Membership of India Council terminates. Lunched with Lady E. Cecil. To Dulwich School Committee. Wrote to Cromer at Cairo.

And he writes to Rivett-Carnac—

I leave the India Office, and am quite content to do so, this month. I have had enough of official work, and I can now betake myself contentedly to other ways of employing my time.

Yet it can hardly have been without much retrospection, and some regret, that Lyall finally severed his official connection with India, which had lasted nearly fifty years, since he joined the Company's College at Haileybury. That he was greatly missed is certain, for a man of his experience and capacity is rare, and those who had been connected with him knew it well.

Some months later Lord Curzon wrote to him—

My dear Lyall,—I always meant, upon your final retirement from the India Council, to write and bid you official adieu as the last Viceroy whom you have assisted to keep in order, and also to say on their behalf, as I am sure I might, as well as on my own, how invaluable are the services which we regard you as having rendered to the Government of India through the Secretary of State, and how greatly that Government regrets and must suffer by their termination.

Somehow or other the good resolve got put on one side. There were the Delhi Durbar and other things. Perhaps, however, though late, the message may not be unwelcome, so I venture to send it, adding the hope that many years may lie before you, in which I doubt not that opportunities will still present themselves to you of rendering service to the country which you know and like so well.

The following is a letter sent to me by Lord George Hamilton, who was Secretary of State for India when Lyall retired, and had a better opportunity

than any one of forming a judgment upon the value of his work in Council.

I was very closely associated with Sir Alfred Lyall during the eight years I was Secretary of State for India, and he was my right-hand adviser not only in many political and foreign questions connected with the external policy of India, but also on multifarious internal matters.

Great as were his literary attributes and powers of initiation and construction, his critical faculties were even more fully developed. This made him at times somewhat difficult to deal with, for he was very critical and cautious in the tendering of advice as regards any new policy or any suggested change. When once he could see his way through difficulties, or came to the conclusion that those difficulties must be faced, then his caution and critical instincts disappeared, and he was prepared to be as bold in the prosecution of what he advocated as he had previously been reluctant to start.

If his criticism could be overcome he was an invaluable coadjutor, for his extraordinary power of writing and drafting public documents insured that the policy to be put forward appeared before the public in the most captivating form. The wonderful ease with which he could convert a mediocre dispatch, by a few apparently trivial alterations, into a document of first-rate literary merit, was well known to all who worked with him. Though his work and life were associated with the Foreign Department and with questions concerned with Native States, he was in addition a most sagacious judge and adviser on internal Indian questions.

It is often said, and I believe it to be true, that there is a gulf between the Western and Eastern mind that few can bridge, and that although conversations and communications may be exchanged between an English official of high standing and education and an Indian magnate equally qualified, in which both apparently agree, still, the words used have a distinct significance and meaning to each of the representatives of the two races. I once asked a most distinguished

Anglo-Indian administrator what was the impression made on his mind by his long Indian experience, and his reply was "That I knew little either about India or the races inhabiting India."

Sir Alfred's subtle mind, his extensive oriental reading and erudition, and the philosophical bent of his original and powerful intellect, did much to abridge this gulf, and he was, in consequence, a more prescient and clear judge of what India wanted, and what we could do to satisfy her wants, than any Anglo-Indian with whom I officially came into contact.

These special qualities, coupled with a lofty idealism and a charming personality, made him an invaluable and delightful colleague, and in looking back over a long official career I can truly say that many of my brightest and happiest recollections are associated with Sir Alfred Lyall.

CHAPTER XV.

1903–1906.

Life of Lord Dufferin—Great variety of occupations—Historical Congress at Rome—Lord Curzon in India—Transcendentalism—View about Mr Gladstone—Russia and Japan—Death of Leslie Stephen—Visit to Edward Clodd at Aldeburgh—Signs of failing health—Farringford.

RELIEVED of his official work, Lyall had now more leisure for his life of Lord Dufferin; but his engagements were still numberless. During the year I find him lecturing on Heroic Poetry; delivering an address on Hinduism to future Indian civilians at Cambridge; attending meetings of the Literary Fund; presiding at Councils of the Central Asian Society; making speeches to the Girls' High School at Streatham; taking the chair at the Synthetic Society; attending the Historical Congress in Rome; visiting Florence and Genoa and Cannes and Paris; presiding at a meeting of the Social and Political League; attending as a member at a meeting of the British Academy, and at meetings of the Institut Colonial; visiting the training-school for the Navy on the *Warspite*; responding for the Cambridge Academicians at Cambridge; at-

tending the Navy Records Society; going to the House of Lords to hear debates; making a "bad speech" at the Mutual Provident Association; attending the African Society, and the distribution of prizes at the Kensington Girls' High School; meeting the American Naval Officers at the United States Embassy; attending at King's College Hospital, and the London School of Economics, and the Dulwich Prize-giving; going down on business of one kind or another to Eton, and Portsmouth, and other places.

For a man of sixty-eight it was a busy and varied life. The constant week-end country visits, and dinners, were going on as before. Once or twice there is in his diary an underlined and rather significant "Dined at Home." Yet he found time in spite of all this to do his writing, for he had some articles in reviews, and on the last day of the year he notes that he had "very nearly finished first volume of the Dufferin Memoir."

About this period of his life his handwriting begins to show signs of deterioration, becoming at times, though only at times, smaller and less clear. The difference seems to be due rather to haste than to anything else, but it is marked. Still, his letters are easy enough to read, and as interesting as ever. To his friend Miss Oakeley, who was Warden of the Victoria College at the McGill University in Canada, he writes—

What you have written about my 'Tennyson' has taken me back to the little book, which I had laid aside on a lofty shelf.

I am very glad to have your thoughts upon it, nor am I surprised that your tendency has been to take special interest in the speculative aspect of Tennyson's poetry; for he has put into striking verse precisely the doubts and queries that haunt sensitive and searching minds at the time when life begins to be taken seriously. His "In Memoriam" struck a deep note for the youth of fifty years ago, and indeed touches chords that will always vibrate. . . . I agree with you that it is his strong sense of natural beauty and his interpretation of the subtle affinities between human moods and emotions and our environment, that constitutes the enduring power of his poetry. Whether the idealistic conception of the world of sense takes away the despondency produced by a conviction of man's insignificance I cannot say. . . .

In April I was at Rome, attending a Historical Congress. Some very distinguished foreigners were there, but I fear I did not follow the proceedings very assiduously; though it was curious to listen to a debate in the Latin tongue. Next week we have here in London a meeting of the Institut Colonial International, where representatives of various countries are to discuss colonial questions. But I think that except among Hollanders and Englishmen there is very little colonial experience or practical knowledge worth ventilating. The Germans are colonists, but they have no colonies. The French have colonies, but they are no colonists.

To Lord Curzon of Kedleston—

It was with great pleasure that I read your very friendly letter of April 9th, from Rewa, for I put the highest value upon your appreciation of any service that I may have rendered to India. In looking back over many years I am sensible, as most of us must be, of numerous shortcomings; but I have never regretted that I chose India for my sphere of work; and I am fortunate in having witnessed, and taken some part in, such historic events as the Sepoy Mutiny and

the second Afghan war. I am now so entirely content to retire that I rejoice in my freedom from official harness; and my inclination is toward turning my attention from Indian affairs to other interests and pursuits.

I have read your speech on the Budget debate (of which you kindly enclosed a copy) with real admiration of the energy and breadth of view that it attests in your government of India. With all that you have said about taxation I agree heartily; and I am particularly glad that you have been able to make substantial reductions; for moderate taxation is the sheet-anchor of our rule in that country, and I believe that the revenue will prove more buoyant in consequence. The management of the land revenue is the most important and difficult point of Indian administration.

That the Durbar should have been so eminently successful at such an almost trifling cost is undoubtedly a financial exploit. . . .

Your survey of the present position of India in Asiatic politics, and indeed in the political world, is very striking. I quite agree that the Indian Foreign Department has become for England what in Russia is called the "Bureau Asiatique." The foreign relations of India are regulated by a kind of unwritten Monroe doctrine. I mean that we maintain over all the countries immediately adjacent the policy of allowing no intervention by other European nations, and the predominance of no influence except our own. It is this necessary attitude that gives us such incessant occupation abroad in Asia, and brings us into continual contact or collision with European rivals.

I am congratulating myself that some years ago, when the Foreign Office offered to take over Somaliland, I eagerly pressed the India Office to close at once with the offer, without any haggling over the terms of transfer. It seemed to me that this bit of African territory would inevitably draw us into complications, in which India would have little interest, and would incur very troublesome responsibilities.

But I also doubted whether the Foreign Office was capable of managing the business it had taken up, and for some time I have been apprehending serious difficulties.

To Miss Oakeley—

To hear from you is always pleasant; though in regard to the subject that we talked about here it is not so easy to write; and new lights upon old questions are rare. About H. Spencer's philosophy, I am so far in agreement with you that on me, as on you, the early readings of his books made an impression that has never left me; though he has latterly fallen out of fashion; and perhaps his close compact reasoning may seem arid to a later generation. I myself am inclined to believe that the deepest thinkers of all ages do not greatly differ in fundamental conclusions, however they may vary as to ways and methods. Just now, however, I have been attentively reading the recently published work of Frederick Myers on Human Personality, which is certainly a new form in Europe of what he calls Transcendentalism, the science of discovering the future of the human soul after death. He is quite sure that the Veil can be penetrated, and that experiment and observation will carry us into the Spiritual world, with which we are to open communication by the development of abnormal natural faculties. Yet his whole system resembles to a very remarkable degree the methods by which Indian ascetics pretend to attain divinity, to perform marvels, and to raise the soul into higher stages of existence. Hypnotism, telepathy, the liberation of the soul by throwing the body into a trance, are processes known and practised in Asia from ancient times. . . .

Here we have the solidarity of empire which Chamberlain is striving to cement—vainly, I think, for the world is moving, to my mind, in another direction, against great Imperial associations and towards natural communities linked together, perhaps by some loose and easy federation, but otherwise un-

shackled, independent, having each its own life and paddling in its own waters. My notion is that Chamberlain is no prophetic statesman. . . .

We have been living very steadily here, where you left us (Vernon Holme), for more than two months, and we depart for London at October's end. I shall leave reluctantly, though the weather has been scandalous—incessant wind and rain; but I like to see the yellow leaves flying, and the moist air, with gleams of light at morning and sunset; whereas London has no horizons, and wears a livid look in the dark wet days. . . .

I have not read Morley's 'Gladstone'; and I have heard of nothing else worth reading. Reviews and magazines I seldom see now, so of literary news I can give you none.

That he read Morley's 'Gladstone' very soon afterwards there can be little doubt; but the book was on a subject which did not greatly attract him. He had many years before lost all belief in Mr Gladstone as a practical statesman. Of course Lyall recognised the astonishing power and versatility of his talents, and some of his other high qualities, but he thought Mr Gladstone a theorist, and "reckless of the real interests of the country." The fact was that Lyall was not easily moved to enthusiasm or dominated by any man's personality, while his political views were wholly independent of party. By reasoning he was an advanced Liberal; by temperament he was a Conservative; by experience of men and affairs and the study of contemporary history he had come to feel that the first thing required was firm and capable government at home and abroad. In that respect he thought Mr Gladstone failed, and nothing would

make him believe in a leader who wanted the essential quality. It was the same in everything. In 1902 he had been in favour of Mr Balfour's Education Act. He did not believe in Colonial Preference, and he scoffed at Tariff Reform, but he was always against Home Rule for Ireland. He did well to keep out of party politics.

Lyall began the year 1904, or rather ended the last, by resigning his seat on the Council of the Girls' Public Day School Company, in which he had taken interest. He had found that the work of visiting the schools at prize-givings and attending other meetings was more than he could manage. But immediately afterwards he was asked to join the Committee of the King's College Hospital, so that his attempt to reduce his list of miscellaneous duties was not very successful. In fact, he found as the years went on that they tended to increase rather than diminish. And his Memoir was giving him more trouble than he had expected. He writes to Rivett-Carnac on the 5th of January—

I am very glad to be rid of official harness, but it is just as well that I have found other work to occupy me, since idleness in London is intolerable. Yet my task of writing a Memoir of Lord Dufferin is rather a burden, involving me in more labour than quite suits me at this late period of my life; for I have had no experience of solid bookmaking, and I flounder among a mass of papers.

Some time during this year, but his letter is undated, he writes to M. de Kerallain—

Your Breton peasants' saying about the third and ninth waves is a fresh instance of the similarity in the folklore as it

has survived on the coasts of France and England, where the intercourse between the two peoples must have been very frequent for centuries. The belief that a third wave is high is well known among us,—to your quotation from Tennyson I could add a line from Swinburne—

> "Who swims in sight of the great third wave,
> That never a swimmer will cross or climb."

And, like so much of folklore, the notion is probably founded to some extent on fact. That is why the poets should be read: they preserve the experience of many generations, romantically expressed. I wish I had received before writing my book your suggestion about making a study of Tennyson's folklore. . . . Pray receive my best wishes for your health and welfare during the coming new year, which I hope may bring, among other good things, a steady improvement in the friendly relations between our two countries, of which I fancy that some auspicious signs are already visible.

Lyall was at this time President of the Central Asian Society, which had been founded a few years before by some men interested in Asiatic affairs for the discussion of questions connected therewith. Always inclined towards friendliness for Russia, Lyall delivered in the course of the year an address in which he leant to her side rather than that of Japan. He thought that the triumph of the Japanese boded ill, in the long-run, to European dominion in Asia, and that the appearance of a formidable Asiatic naval power might some day prove inconvenient to England. "I must say," he observes in a letter, "that my views by no means pleased the great majority of my audience, and the discussion went against me." But it was a thoughtful address, and

attracted considerable attention among the small number of experts who give heed to such matters. It was followed a few months later by the North Sea incident, which caused so much excitement in England, and for the moment turned every one against the Russians. Even Lyall commented upon "the incredible rashness" of the Russian Admiral, and wrote that it was

> quite impossible to admit the pretensions of the Russian naval commanders to fire upon any ships they may meet on the mere suspicion that these ships may be hostile vessels.

But he earnestly hoped for a pacific solution of the difficulty, and was greatly relieved when it came about. "The English did well to be angry," he wrote, "yet our Ministers did better to avoid war." Nor did he ever change his views about the bearing of the Russo-Japanese conflict upon European predominance in Asia.

> The most remarkable (because unexpected) phenomenon is the appearance of a strong Asiatic naval power, a complete novelty in the world's history, for since the day of Marathon the Asiatics have been powerless by sea; and the fact that the coasts of Asia have been always undefended explains the ease with which the maritime European nations have established themselves in India and elsewhere.

At this time he writes to Miss Oakeley—

> I have been so completely occupied with my Memoir of Lord Dufferin that I fear my correspondence has been neglected; though I read your letter with interest and much pleasure. My work immerses me in documents of all kinds,

and compels me to wander in a labyrinth of old letters, memoranda, and blue-books. It is a business for which I have little capacity, so I am easily fatigued by it. But I have been obliged to study Canada and Canadian politics, an entirely new field for me, and I have picked up a certain quantity of information about your adopted country.

Lyall's diary for this year, 1904, again shows him, in spite of his work, attending numerous meetings of the various societies to which he belonged, and, of course, almost nightly dinners. I do not know that there are any entries of special interest except those which show that sick friends had to thank him for some kindly visits. "Went to see Alfred Austin in a nursing home" occurs more than once, and there are the following entries in January and February: "Saw Leslie Stephen in a dying state—very friendly." "Went to see poor Leslie Stephen, who spoke affectionately to me when I left." "Leslie Stephen died this morning."

Lyall had much in common with him and felt his death keenly. In Maitland's 'Life of Leslie Stephen' the following words are quoted from a letter written by Lyall about him—

> Conversation with him was always a great pleasure to me; he had a vein of fine humour and a masculine habit of thought that gave expression to his straightforward character. He was a man of whose strength and rectitude of judgment I had a high appreciation, and on whose steadfast friendship, whenever it might be put to the proof, I felt that one might have relied confidently. During his last illness, when I saw him so frequently, his unfailing cheerfulness and fortitude made a deep impression on me.

When, a few months after Stephen's death, some of his friends met to consider the best means of doing honour to his memory, Lyall was in the chair, and Lady Ritchie received from him a letter on the subject. He had brought forward the proposal that a Lectureship should be founded at Cambridge.

I hope that this conclusion may win your approval. To my mind a series of lectures given by distinguished men, on some subject—History, Biography, or Ethics—associated with Sir Leslie's own literary work and predilections, will be a very effectual mode of commemorating his name, and of keeping the remembrance of him alive in his University and his College.

Your concurrence, as one of Sir Leslie's best friends, will add to my pleasure in taking some part in promoting a memorial to one whom neither of us, I think, is ever likely to forget.

Shortly before this letter was written, Lyall attended the funeral of a very different but equally remarkable man, Sir Henry Stanley. Lady Stanley had for years been one of Lyall's most intimate friends, and remained so until his death. Among all those whom he learned to know during the latter part of his life there was no one whose advice and affection he valued more highly.

A short visit to the Riviera, a few days with Lord Tennyson in Farringford, and two months at Swinford during the summer, helped him through his work; and in October he was back in London at the usual routine of society and societies, making bad speeches, according to his diary, but getting through

a variety of self-imposed duties. He did not forget his old companions in India, but attended this year the annual dinner of the Indian Civil Service, and that of the "Political" or Indian Diplomatic Service, of which as Foreign Secretary he had been the chief twenty-five years earlier.

Christmas he spent with his friends the Spencer Walpoles, and the end of the year found him at Wilton Park with the Henry Whites. By that time he had finished his Life of Lord Dufferin, and had sent all the papers back to Clandeboye.

Lyall was now seventy years old. It is an age when many men consider themselves entitled to rest from their labours; but to him idleness was, as he said, "intolerable," and on his seventieth birthday there is an entry in his diary: "Met Prothero,[1] by appointment at the Athenæum, to settle my contribution to the Cambridge Modern History." Later in the year he was at work on an article upon Afghanistan for 'The Encyclopædia Britannica,' and upon one for 'The Edinburgh Review' about Native States in India. Yet perhaps, after the Life of Lord Dufferin was finished, he took things more easily for a time, giving himself up to the enjoyment of his leisure and especially to the company of his children. It was a great pleasure and happiness to him that for a portion of this year they were all together, his younger son and daughter having returned from India. With his son, who had been absent six years, he went during the spring to Rome, where he attended the Session of

[1] Mr G. W. Prothero, Editor of 'The Quarterly Review.'

the "Institut Colonial," and found his friend Henry White installed as American Ambassador. After a visit to Milan and the Lago Maggiore he went on to Wiesbaden, to meet his daughter, and then returned to England. He had thoroughly enjoyed himself, and his diary of the 12th May has the entry: "So ends a very pleasant and successful expedition."

In the diary for June there are a few words regarding a Whitsuntide visit paid by Lyall to his friend Edward Clodd at Aldeburgh. He was to enjoy more than once the hospitality of that pleasant house, which has seen such a succession of interesting guests. On this occasion the other visitors were "Picton, Sir F. Pollock, Frazer of 'The Golden Bough'." Lyall had criticised 'The Golden Bough' rather freely in 'The Edinburgh Review,' and perhaps both men were a little shy at their first intimate meeting. Lyall certainly was. But on Whit-Monday they all sailed down the broad river to Orford in Clodd's boat the *Lotus*, and spent an hour in seeing the old Norman castle and church. Then they found the wind against them, and had a long row back, Lyall and Frazer each taking an oar. After that, there was not much shyness left between them; and the old *Lotus*, now, alas, "nail sick" and retired from active service, saw them land together on the best of terms.

A little later I find Lyall dining with one of the three who had shared his cabin in the *Ava* when he went out to India fifty years before, and then going with his son Robert for "ten days' very pleasant tour

in France"; where, at Quimper, he made the acquaintance of his French correspondent, Monsieur René de Kerallain, who has not only translated his 'Asiatic Studies,' but has even succeeded in turning into French "The Old Pindaree." From M. and Madame de Kerallain, Lyall and his son received, as he notes in his diary, "hospitality and friendliness unbounded," and the visit was one which he thoroughly enjoyed.

In the summer Lyall occupied for a couple of months the rectory of Bishopsbourne, Hooker's parsonage three hundred years before, an old-fashioned roomy house with a pleasant garden and shady lawn. Here his son and daughter joined him, and four grandchildren; and he was within driving distance of his brother James at Statenborough. He was not without other visitors, among them Miss Gertrude Lowthian Bell, the distinguished traveller and writer, who had become an intimate friend. It was, perhaps, one of the pleasantest summers in his life.

Such times, unhappily, are soon over. On the 30th October he notes in his diary: "This evening saw the last of our family bridge-parties," and next day his son left London to take up again a "political" appointment in India. "We can look back on many days spent together, and look forward doubtfully to meeting again."

During the rest of the year Lyall was in London, leading his usual life—much interested in a variety of matters. Among these were the Curzon-Kitchener controversy, in which he supported Lord Curzon's views by a long letter to 'The Times'; the change

of Government and the new Liberal Cabinet; the affairs of Dulwich College, of which he was a Governor; meetings at King's College Hospital; the evolution of the Unionist Free Trade Club; and the composition of his stanzas for a meeting of the Omar Khayyám Club, which will be found in his volume of verse. The writer of the Upton Letters calls Omar Khayyám's poetry "the most beautiful presentment of pure Agnosticism that has ever been given to the world"; and apart from the exquisite English in which FitzGerald has clothed it, it had for Lyall a strong attraction. Christmas was spent, as usual, at Hartfield Grove with the Walpoles, and the year ended with a short visit to the Poet Laureate at Swinford. It had been for Lyall a happy year, leaving, as he notes, "pleasant recollections of my children's company." Two had now gone back to India, and the last words in his diary are: "I hope to see them again." Lyall was not generally regarded as a very domestic man, nor was he; and it is pleasing to get a glimpse of this side of his character.

I quote here a few passages from his letters written during the year to M. de Kerallain—

The crushing defeat of the Russians by the Japanese is an event of world-wide importance, which may change the whole political future of Asia; and will undoubtedly affect the political dominion of European States everywhere on that continent. I agree entirely with your opinion that no one can yet foresee what may be, twenty years or so hence, the situation in the Far East; but in England I am among a very small minority of those who believe that unqualified rejoicing over Japanese victories is a proof of little wisdom

or foresight. France, I fear, has distinct cause for anxiety about the eventual security of her Indo-Chinese possessions.

You will soon find, I think, that your protectorate over Morocco may become troublesome. It is one thing to place the Sultan's Government *en tutelle*, and quite another thing to deal with the independent tribes, who care nothing for diplomatic arrangements. We have had experience of this sort in Afghanistan.

The European Governments, who were quarelling over the partition of China, have stirred up a nest of yellow hornets, which are now swarming about the ears of their foremost assailant, and will use their stings on all who go near them. . . .

All Asia has been stirred by the success of the Japanese; but the difference between Western and Eastern Asia in race, religion, economic conditions, and density of population, is so wide that I doubt whether India and the Mahomedan kingdoms will be much affected by the Yellow Peril.

I am glad that Frazer's 'Golden Bough' is to appear in a French translation almost simultaneously with your translation of my article. My criticisms made little effect upon those who swear by him in England. I have some hope that readers in France may agree with me. . . .

I don't believe that the wisest man living can make a sure guess as to what will be the political condition and distribution of power in Eastern Asia twenty-five years hence. . . . But I should not expect the yellow races to break out westward, unless the European Governments in Asia go on weakening themselves on that continent by internal quarrels. A really good understanding between England and Russia on Asiatic affairs ought to raise a powerful barrier against any such encroachments, but such a league is just now far distant. . . . I hope, in the interests of both nations (France and England), that republican susceptibilities will not damage our present relations. France and England need each other's friendship. Now that Russia is for the time disabled, France

is alone in front of the Triple Alliance. . . . And the English are honestly willing to shake hands with their former rivals, and to make up old quarrels. Meanwhile, let us cultivate our literary gardens.

To my mind the substantial benefit to Asia and Europe that will be obtained by the victories of Japan, is that henceforward all projects for the partition of China among the European powers . . . will come to an end, . . . and the commercial enterprise of Europe will no longer be able to break into Chinese markets, backed by cannon and by missionaries. This will be found disagreeable, but it is good for our morals and our manners. I have instructed my London bookseller to despatch to you 'Turkey in Europe,' by Odysseus. . . . The preface is particularly well written, and the whole book is the outcome of the personal observation and experience of a very clever man.

. . . . . .

I am glad that you like Sir Charles Eliot's book. He is one of the few Englishmen who have caught glimpses into the interior of the Oriental mind, and understand the working thereof.

To Miss Oakeley—

John Bright's words . . . about popular education and newspapers being a sure antidote to warlike propensities, illustrate very well the futility of political prophecies, and also betray a certain superficiality and narrowness of view in his knowledge of the Demos. I think that all history shows the Demos to be invariably pugnacious. . . . When the Russian blunder in the North Sea occurred . . . the daily newspapers, upon which Bright would have relied for keeping the people straight, were quite reckless in their efforts to turn heads in the wrong way. . . .

About psychology, as it is now taught, I agree with what you write; the tendency seems to be towards positivism and the accumulation of facts; the demand for accurate scientific

training, in that sense, is rapidly prevailing everywhere, and education becomes more and more utilitarian.

You will have noticed that a formidable attack is being made upon Greek as a compulsory subject in University courses. There is undoubtedly much to be said against forcing it upon young folk who have not, and never will have, any taste for that study; but if the time comes when Greek shall rank with Hebrew, as some openly desire and propose, the eventual effect will be to damage still more the influence of Ideas. There is a considerably numerous class, to which I belong, who do not pretend to scholarship, but who have kept up their smattering of Greek sufficiently for life-long appreciation of the literature—no small advantage on the side of general culture,—but the smatterers are now likely to disappear.

On education my own mind has never been clear; so many of those who are taught don't know how to use what they are obliged to learn. The real students are a natural aristocracy intellectually, who will probably find their way upward under any system that gives them their chance. And I guess that compulsory Greek is entirely wasted on a majority at school and college, as much as compulsory philosophy would be. Compulsory mathematics were quite wasted on me. And it is largely a question of national character; the Germans, I think, have always been a studious people—not so the English. I wonder how far the Roman Empire profited by high education; I do not know whether they had state schools. I fancy that their dominion was due, like the English dominion, to superior wealth and energy, and to political experience. I doubt the power of education to mould national character, though of course it is essential to the successful direction of state affairs by the leading men. . . .

The Russian Government is in perilous straits, with a dangerous war on its hands, and the whole country in wild internal confusion. Yet I expect it will eventually emerge

without revolution or dissolution. The Japanese cannot strike a fatal blow at the heart of Russia, and so soon as a peace can be patched up this resolute despotism will turn fiercely upon disorderly revolters, and will crush them. I doubt whether any Government has ever lost power, and was overturned, that did not first lose courage.

So far, though Lyall had never been a robust man, and of late years had taken little physical exercise, which, being spare by nature and abstemious by inclination, he did not seem to require, he had on the whole enjoyed fair health, and found himself equal to any exertion, mental or physical, which was demanded of him. He was now to receive his first warning that old age was really coming upon him. In the middle of February of the year 1906 he had one night a sudden giddiness and fall, followed by a momentary sense of confusion, which seemed to show that there was something seriously wrong. He took it calmly, as "a slight warning that my working days are ending," and set about his business next day as usual, presiding at a meeting of the Central Asian Society. But, though his diary at this time shows the customary round of social and business engagements, he was troubled by a feeling of languor and dulness; and soon afterwards he found it necessary to put away an article he was writing for 'The Edinburgh Review,' and to abstain for a month or two from literary work, or anything which could put a strain upon him. The symptoms did not last long, and while they did last there is not in his letters or diary the smallest sign of alarm or self-pity; but they

were the first indications of a weakness of the heart which from this time increased upon him until at last it ended in his death.

In May he was once more absorbed in his 'Edinburgh' article, and greatly interested in some meetings with Sir Arthur Nicolson, who was about to take over the Russian Embassy. As I have more than once noticed, Lyall had for five-and-twenty years past steadily advocated an understanding with Russia in regard to Asiatic affairs; and he took the opportunity to bring up the question again.

Soon afterwards he left England for a visit to Dresden. It was an unlucky visit. Shortly before reaching Hanover, Lyall stood up in the railway carriage to light a cigarette; the express train swung rapidly round a curve; he lost his balance and fell, severely injuring his back. A rather imprudent expedition to the Picture Gallery at Dresden made it worse, and he found himself crippled for the time, with "nothing to read but an Elzevir edition of Pascal's 'Provinciales,' which I have brought from home. Also a pocket Virgil." The injury turned into an attack of pleurisy, but this was slight; and with the help of a borrowed Homer, and Thiers' 'Histoire de l'Empire,' Lyall managed to pass the time till he was fit to travel again. A great pleasure to him meanwhile was a visit from his old friend Bishop Wilkinson, who had just returned from a journey in Russia. They discussed the victories of the Japanese, and the probable effect upon the populations of Asia; and Lyall was much interested in

the Bishop's account of the Russian situation. He did not get back to London until after the middle of June, and suffered considerably after his return. Evidently his health and powers of work had been really affected, for I find in his diary of the 24th the words—

> Finished laboriously my 'Edinburgh Review' article[1]—dissatisfied with it—hope it will satisfy the Editor. Probably my last bit of literature—the knack of writing seems to be leaving me—my ideas run very slowly into words.

It was far from being his last bit of literature. A yachting trip with Lord Rendel to the North of Scotland did him much good, and his cure was completed, for the time at least, by two pleasant months at Albury, with the picturesque Surrey scenery about him. In August he delivered a lecture at Cambridge on "The Establishment of the British Empire in India," for the University Extension students, and the peaceful time at Albury was broken by various visits to other places. He was as restless as ever about staying long in one spot. But he did have some quiet, and found leisure enough to write another article for the 'Edinburgh.'[2] In October he returned to the old round of work and dinners and "week-ends." For the first time I find in his diary a sign of weariness: "I am in much doubt whether these week-end parties repay time and money spent upon them." But he found interest in the quarrel between

[1] "The Political Situation in Asia."
[2] On Swinburne.

'The Times' Book Club and the publishers, and also in the project for founding a School of Oriental Studies in London; and in December he went down to Aldershot, where he delivered to a large gathering of officers a lecture on "European Dominion in Asia." It was a clearly written thoughtful paper, and was very well received.

A visit to the Walpoles at Hartfield Grove followed, and then, after a day in London, where he notes that he "dined alone at home—a rare incident," he went on to Lord Tennyson at Farringford. He was always happy there, and his diary for the 31st of December has the words: "The usual walking, talking, and smoking in the afternoon. So the year closes pleasantly, among kind friends. No pleasanter hospitality for me than at Farringford."

CHAPTER XVI.

1907–1911.

Sense of lessening literary power—Begins to grow tired of social duties—French translation of 'Asiatic Studies'—Anglo-Russian Convention—Variety of interests and offices—Congress of Religions—Charity Organisation Society—Physical strength lessening—Warning of danger—Indian reforms—Views on English politics—Votes for Liberals, January 1910—Votes for Unionists, December 1910—Writing for 'Edinburgh Review,' 1911—Last days and letters—Death.

In 1907 Lyall brought out a new and enlarged edition of his 'British Dominion in India,' with a supplementary chapter on our system of Protectorates. This chapter is a valuable addition to the book, but he was not satisfied with it. He writes of it as "not well put together—on the whole indifferent work—but no composition has given me so much trouble for a long time. Evidently my literary knack is forsaking me. . . . I rack my brain for the right word, and cannot keep on the train of ideas." Lyall's sense of lessening literary power was not perhaps wholly deceptive. The many lectures and review articles which he was still to write are all thoughtful and original, such as most men might well be proud to have written; and Mr

Arthur Elliot, who edited the 'Edinburgh' until after Lyall's death, tells me that some of his best work was done during his last four years. But the work was not done so easily; though he used his weapon with his old skill, the hand that held it was beginning to tire.

In April of this year Lyall was elected Chairman of the Board of Dulwich Governors in the place of Lord Davey. He had always taken a real interest in this part of his duties, and he was pleased at his election, though the office was at times not an easy one. That he filled it with thorough efficiency was the opinion of the whole Board.

He was pleased, too, by some unexpected tributes to the value of his literary work. He met at the Breakfast Club the Prime Minister of the Australian Commonwealth, Mr Deakin, and writes in his diary—

> He came up to me after breakfast and said that he was a great admirer of my 'Verses in India'—often read them out to his family. Also praised 'Asiatic Studies'—so that I have appreciative readers in the distant colony.

At the same time an American editor was including in an Oriental Historical Series his 'British Dominion in India.'

He went over in June to Brussels for a meeting of the Institut Colonial International, and his many business engagements did not decrease. But he was at last beginning to feel weary of the incessant round of social duties; and the sudden loss during the year of one of his dearest friends,

Spencer Walpole, grieved him deeply. From this time on I noticed in him, not any failure of intellectual grasp or of humour, but a disinclination for going into the world, and a growing gentleness of thought and manner. He had always been kind-hearted at bottom, but he had not always seemed so. Now the old touch of cynicism was giving place to a certain humility and consideration for others which were somehow a little saddening, but made him more lovable.

He spent the late summer months at Aldworth, Lord Tennyson's beautiful house, near Haslemere, in which the poet had died. From the terrace in front of it there was a wide view over the Sussex Weald to the sea, and the country about it was delightful. Here Lyall was very happy, receiving the many friends who came to see him, and doing some quiet literary work. He had been asked to deliver the "Ford" Lectures at Oxford, and was also preparing review articles.

Edward Clodd, among others, came to spend a day or two at Aldworth, and arranged with him for the publication by the Rationalist Press Association of some selections from his 'Asiatic Studies.' Lyall agreed to the publication, though he hardly anticipated that these Eastern subjects would find much favour among the public at large. I am told that over eight thousand copies of the selections have been sold, many of these circulating in India. The French translation of the 'Studies' was going on at the same time, and in this Lyall was much interested.

It was, he wrote, "an unique example of collaboration, by an Englishman and Frenchman jointly, in dealing with a curious and important subject." His letters to M. de Kerallain were many and full. But there is not space for them here.

Shortly after his return to London, Lyall met with an accident which, to a man of his age, might have had serious consequences. He was walking across Parliament Street, when a man on a bicycle rode over him and knocked him down. He was stunned, and woke up to find himself badly bruised and shaken. The thing was so sudden that he did not know what had happened until some bystanders told him. But no great harm was done, and he was soon well again, and able to laugh at the indignity he had suffered.

I have mentioned Mr Deakin's praise of his verses. In the course of the year he had a rather curious proof of the influence exerted by them. He notes in his diary—

> A. told me that in his youth he had a mind to enter the Church, but altered it after reading "Meditations of a Hindu Raja"—my verses published just then.

His diary reminds me of some pleasant evenings spent with him. He was then President of the Omar Khayyám Club, to which he had introduced me, and I went with him to the Club dinner, where he read his Address. He was not fond of speaking; but he enjoyed these literary gatherings, where there was no formality, much more than he did some of the other entertainments he had to attend. At one of

them, the Mutiny Veteran dinner at the Albert Hall, he was characteristically uncomfortable. He rarely spoke of his fighting days, having an extreme dislike to posing as a soldier; and he "slipped out at the end, not quite satisfied with having been there."

He spent his Christmas with the Poet Laureate at Swinford Manor, and his diary for 1907 closes with the words—

> So ends a year during which I have lost some valuable friends and pleasant acquaintances by their death. For the last month I have been engaged, rather laboriously, in the work of preparing my Forde Lectures, of correcting proofs of S. Walpole's two volumes for publication, and in examining the proof of the French translation of 'Asiatic Studies.' . . . On the whole, I feel as if I were bearing my years well.

But he was ageing—his hair had long been white, and he was conscious at times of some want of memory. He told me after his Omar Khayyám dinner that he did not now like speaking without notes. His diary of the 31st December mentions his accident, and says it occurred during the month, whereas it occurred in October. Yet his intellect seemed as keen as ever, and his interest in the affairs of the world. He was in frequent communication with John Morley, now Secretary of State for India, upon Indian affairs; and he was corresponding with Lord Roberts about Native Chiefs and their Imperial Service troops, about the alleged spread of disaffection among certain classes of Indians, and about National Service in England. What his views were upon that last point I do not know, for to the

best of my recollection he never spoke to me about it; but he attended the National Service meeting at the Queen's Hall on the 16th May, and wrote to Lord Roberts about the manifest success of it.

This year 1907 saw the announcement of the Anglo-Russian Convention, the principle of which, an understanding with Russia, Lyall had so long advocated. Naturally he approved of the Convention; and he was not disposed to attach much importance to the objections which were brought against some of its terms, especially the partition of Persia into, very unequal, "spheres of influence." In principle he was doubtless right. An understanding with Russia, on equal terms, carried out with good faith and self-respect on both sides, cannot fail to be of great advantage. And until the beginning of last century England and Russia had been traditional friends. Whether he was right in thinking that the terms did not much matter is another question. They did not perhaps raise our reputation in Asia. Moreover, it was argued for the Convention, though not by him, that concessions were the price we paid for assurance against invasion. That is an argument of which it is difficult to speak with patience. But it may be confidently assumed that no such argument weighed with the framers of the Convention, and that they really regarded the terms as being fair to both parties. Yet one thing must be said, that if the effect of the Convention should be to make the nation rely for the safety of India upon anything but our own military strength, it

would involve serious danger. This Lyall thoroughly recognised, as he had recognised the kindred danger which might be involved in the Japanese Alliance. But, taking the Convention as an honest attempt on both sides to make an end of the old antagonism and maintain the balance of power in Europe, Lyall cordially approved of it.

In the spare page at the beginning of Lyall's diary for 1908 is a brief memorandum which shows the variety of his interests at this time, and the estimation in which he was held.

In the last few months up to date I have been invited to undertake office as follows:—

1. President of the British Academy.
2. Chairmanship of Dulwich College.
3. President of the Literary Society.
4. Chairman at a Conference of the Christian Conference Society.
5. President of the Congress of Religions at Oxford.

He did not accept all these invitations. He thought a younger man should be found for the presidency of the Literary Society, and he did not apparently think himself altogether fitted for some of the other positions named. But he did, though reluctantly and with diffidence, become President of the Congress of Religions at Oxford; and before the end of the year the list of such invitations and acceptances had increased.

Nevertheless, from this time he began to withdraw in some measure from general society and to live

a quieter life. He still went out frequently, for he enjoyed mixing with his fellow-men; but he felt that he was growing old, and he now set himself to face, with courage and calmness, the probability that he would not live much longer. On his 72nd birthday he writes—

> Still retain fair health and some vigour. I begin to take short views of life ahead, and feel a serious interest in contemplating its approaching end. All that I hope is that the few years left will bring no grave misfortunes or losses.

And with that he turns to his work, his various societies, his "Ford" Lectures for Oxford, and his

> supervision and arrangement of Spencer Walpole's two new volumes as they passed through the press, a rather laborious and responsible work.

In June he was at Paris attending the meetings of the Institut Colonial, and staying with Henry White, now American Ambassador to France. He enjoyed this visit; but was saddened soon afterwards by the death of his sister Mrs Petre, the third sister he had lost since he returned to England. She had taken charge of his children during his absence in India, and with his strong family affection he felt the loss deeply. It was, he wrote, "a hard and heavy blow."

The later months of the summer he spent at Aldworth, which he had again taken from Lord Tennyson, and there he settled down to literary work, but not with his old enjoyment. His address for the Congress of Religions he found "a great

burden," and when it was finished he notes that it is "not at all satisfactory, but must do *faute de mieux*." Still it was a pleasant summer, made more so by visits from friends, and to them. Baron von Hügel, with whom he always enjoyed a talk on religious and philosophical subjects; Mr Ralli, on whose yacht he had joined in more than one long cruise; Lord and Lady Rendel; Sir Frederick Pollock; Edward Clodd; James Bryce, from America; his old schoolfellow Whitting, from Cambridge; and others. And when in September he attended the Congress of Religions his address was well received. Nevertheless, when I was with him at Aldworth it seemed to me that he was not well—he could not walk uphill without trouble, and there was a certain languor about him which I was sorry to see.

On return to London he was invited to become Chairman of the Charity Organisation Society; and to this important work he devoted a considerable part of his time. I am told that he was a thoroughly efficient chairman, rather masterful, and not in favour of long discussions, but conscientious and clear-headed. His diary for 1908 has many entries referring to meetings of this Society, alternating with entries about the Committee on Oriental Studies and other branches of work. And he had written an article for 'The Edinburgh Review' on "The Political Situation in Europe," which appeared in the following January. The year closed for him happily enough. His daughter had come back from India, his son was also expected, and he looked

forward to seeing once more at least his whole family together.

During this year he had received a copy of his 'Asiatic Studies,' in their French form, with valuable notes by the translator, M. René de Kerallain. The book was presented in July to the Académie des Inscriptions with a striking commendation by M. Barth.

The following are a few extracts from Lyall's letters written during this year :—

To Lord Cromer—

Having now read with attention and great interest your book on 'Modern Egypt,' I can appreciate thoroughly the force and insight into Oriental politics with which it has been written. It can hardly fail to open the average British mind to a better understanding of the prodigious difficulties that encompass the work of administration in the East, and to diminish the risk of repeating the blunders and incoherences which disordered the policy of our Government from 1880 to 1885. . . .

Your book on Egypt sets out the great problem for which we are all seeking a solution—how to reconcile Oriental populations with the dominion of Europe. We shall have to find this solution or abandon the attempt, in the course of the 20th century. . . .

I am, of course, highly gratified by your reference to the 'Asiatic Studies,' in the footnote to page 231 of the 2nd volume. It encourages me in the belief that we are working in the same direction—towards explaining, in some degree, the irreconcilable and ingrained differences between the ideas and habits of Asia (including Egypt) and Europe.

. . . With regard to the events and transactions that preceded the establishment of the English Protectorate in Egypt,

it is really wonderful that . . . Gladstone's incapacity or unwillingness to comprehend and face the situation did not turn the whole business into confusion and failure, and produce greater calamities than actually occurred. Material interests, the heavy money stake of the European financiers in Egypt, the pluck and tact of the men on the spot, prevailed. Just as they will always prevail in India, where the immense investments of English capitalists will always have a sobering effect in England upon Liberal theories for that country.

I used to think that, apart from financial considerations, the dispossession of Ismail Pasha in 1879 was of doubtful expediency, because at the time I felt certain that any Khedive set up and supported by European authority was sure to break down. I believe it to be almost an axiom in Asiatic politics that under those conditions a ruler invariably fails, because the intervention of the foreigner turns all his countrymen against him, as we have seen in Afghanistan, and see now in Morocco. In Egypt it produced a sort of national rising against Tewfik, and led straight to Arabi's military revolt. . . .

What will be the eventual outcome of our position in Egypt is impossible to predict. The weak point in it seems to me that our occupation is still avowedly provisional, so that the restless spirits can always speculate on a change. In India our Government is an accomplished fact, so that we can count on the support of the great Conservative party in that country. Whether self-governing institutions can ever succeed with an Oriental people, except in the Far East, no one can say. We may well doubt whether European education will facilitate their establishment. But I may remark that if Persia, the cleverest of Mahometan nations, succeeds in transforming the old-fashioned despotism into any kind of durable constitutional *régime*, their example will be a great encouragement to the advanced politicians. They can now look round the world, and perceive that India is the only great country ruled by foreigners, who are not even inhabitants.

To Colonel Rivett-Carnac—

Morley's constitutional reforms of the Indian Councils alarm many of the old school of Anglo-Indians; but I myself consider that the experiment, though a bold one, is worth trying, and that some risks must be faced in order to satisfy the natural desire of natives for a larger share in the administration. I do not think it possible that the system of governing a vast Empire by a civil service, chosen by competitive examination in England, can be prolonged indefinitely,—it is too exclusively bureaucratic. . . .

The Bengali is a cowardly rascal. He puts forward schoolboys and raw youths to throw bombs and to be the nominal editors of seditious newspapers. The British Government must show its teeth in earnest before long, or there will be more murders. . . .

To Miss Oakeley—

I suspect that most people who have practical acquaintance with the present state of education, would agree that too much is attempted, and that many things are crowded into young heads which can only accommodate them partially and superficially; with the result that instruction on many subjects is completely wasted, the knowledge being overlaid or obliterated by more immediately necessary or useful acquirements later. Bonar Law, a rather prominent M.P., addressed Alleyn's School at Dulwich on Thursday, when the prizes were given. He mentioned that for five years he studied hard and incessantly at Greek when a youth—and he declared that now he cannot understand a word in a Greek sentence,—has much difficulty in reading the character.

The Congress at Oxford can hardly have failed to impress those who had no previous familiarity with the subjects discussed, with a sense of the extraordinary variety and fecundity of the multiform religious instinct in man. Many species are naturally disappearing before a changing environ-

ment, and others are being transformed, but I believe it will be very long before the human race abandons its belief in the supernatural, though the notion of divine interposition in the world's affairs may be relinquished, and the higher minds may substitute religious ideas for the belief in historic facts. But I doubt whether science will lead us back to a religious attitude—it disowns all connection with things beyond experience, and refuses to concern itself with problems of which the solution is not demonstrable. Science would agree that all its researches are bounded by a mystery, but the mystical spirit, which sees beyond by intuition, is not admitted.

It may be well, in connection with this subject, to quote a passage from another letter of Lyall's, not written at this time. It states that he had reached the

conclusion, based upon a rather wide observation of religions in various parts of the world, that to the vast majority of mankind some form of religious belief, at any rate of Theism, is a matter of primary mental necessity: it is inherent in their constitution, and without it they would suffer serious impoverishment. I am convinced that if the religious sense or emotion, that feeling of reliance on spiritual aid and support which is expressed in prayer, were generally to disappear, mankind at large would fall to a lower moral level; the only spiritual influence which now raises their lives above mere materialism would be taken away.

The question of religion had always the deepest fascination for Lyall's contemplative nature, as his published writings show; and I have been astonished more than once to hear him described as an irreligious man. Nothing could be farther from the truth. Much reading and thought, and the study of various

religions, had left him with little belief in dogma; but his was an essentially religious mind, and from anything like ill-will towards Christianity he was wholly free. One who knew him very well wrote to me

> that all who knew Sir Alfred Lyall must have been impressed by his reluctance to say anything that might in the slightest degree hurt the susceptibilities of others whose views might differ from his own.

This, as I can say with confidence from many discussions with him in old days, was the barest truth;[1] and there was more than this in him. Regard for the susceptibilities of others is only what might be expected from any one with the feelings of a gentleman. Lyall had, beyond this, especially in his later years, a genuine reluctance to say anything that might shake the faith of others,—a certain reverence for spiritual feeling in itself,—while old associations had much power over his sensitive nature. There is a passage in Lecky's 'Map of Life' which makes one think of him—

> Nor is it always those who have most completely abandoned dogmatic systems who are the least sensible to the moral beauty which has grown up around them. The music of the village church, which sounds so harsh and commonplace to the worshipper within, sometimes fills with tears the eyes of the stranger who sits without, listening among the tombs.

The year 1909 opened brightly for Lyall with the arrival from India of his younger son. He notes

[1] When he knew there was no danger of hurting one, he would permit himself a gentle hit. For example, "I think you are sure to be elected at the Athenæum, which favours men of distinction who are not Radicals and who believe in Hell."

the fact in his diary, and a day or two later he writes, "My 74th birthday; I feel very well for my age; have preserved a certain degree of activity." Nevertheless, a journey which he made with his son in the spring to the Riviera and the Italian Lakes and Venice, returning by way of Switzerland, made him feel that his "physical strength was lessening"; and it struck me when I saw him occasionally at this time that although he was intellectually as bright as ever, and in excellent spirits—cheered by the arrival of his son, and the marriage of a granddaughter—he was beginning to look frail. As a fact, he was in considerable pain at times; and before the London season was over he was told that his heart was dangerously affected, and that he must for the future avoid sudden or violent exertion. He took the announcement with his usual steadiness. "Perhaps," he wrote, "this tells me how I shall eventually depart." But though after this time he became more careful about walking fast or otherwise tiring himself, his life was as busy as ever. The very day that he was warned of his danger I find him entertaining a party of friends at dinner; the next day he attends the Board of a Company with which he was connected, then makes arrangements for the publication of a cheap edition of Lord Dufferin's Life, then goes to an Old Age Pensions meeting, and finishes up with a dinner at "the Club" to celebrate the anniversary of Samuel Johnson's death.

It was, in fact, for him a particularly interesting season, and, in spite of all, a pleasant one. Lord

Morley was bringing in his Bill for reforms in India, and Lyall seems to have had frequent discussions with him and others interested in the question,—among them Lord Cromer, Lord Curzon, and Lord Reay. It would not perhaps be going too far to assume that the measures introduced were to some extent moulded on his advice. Lord Cromer writes on this point—

> Apropos of Lyall's views on recent Indian reforms, I think it might be worth your while to read the speech I made in the House of Lords on February 24th, 1909. . . . That speech was made after several lengthy conversations with Lyall, and though I am not prepared to say that he would agree with every word of it, I can state pretty confidently that he entirely concurred in the general line of argument which I adopted.

This statement is borne out by the following letter to Lord Cromer, which shows Lyall's views on the subject:—

> It may be worth while to send you in writing the substance of what I said to you yesterday in conversation upon the question of appointing an Indian member to the Viceroy's Executive Council.
>
> My view of the situation is that the present bureaucratic system of Government, though it is the best method of securing efficient administration, cannot long be maintained. It is, in act, a benevolent despotism, very effective for the impartial dispensation of justice, for preserving order, promoting education, and pressing forward improvements in the material condition of the people. But at the present time we can perceive everywhere in Asia the beginning of a movement toward giving the higher classes a larger share in the government of their respective countries, toward bringing men of capacity and competence into the upper ranks of administra-

tion, and investing them with some power of exerting their influence on the course of affairs. I believe that in India, which is one of the greatest and richest empires in Asia, and is under the sovereignty of a free self-governing nation, it is impossible—certainly impolitic—to resist this movement. No other considerable country in the world is ruled by non-resident foreigners, nor is any other administration in the world almost entirely in the hands of a civil service of officials selected in a foreign country by stringent educational tests. In my opinion it is necessary to modify this system, not only by widening the Legislative Councils, but also by introducing, gradually, men of independence and influence into the executive offices, remembering that in a properly constituted government it is the executive authority that initiates and determines all important legislation.

Now, for the purpose of accomplishing successfully the introduction of reforms in the direction of self-government in India, the policy of the English rulers should evidently be to lean on the moderate party among the natives, and to strengthen it against the extremists. If we can satisfy that party and acquire its support, I believe that the other faction can be sufficiently restrained, for I hold that the moderates represent the views and aspirations of a very great majority of those among the Indian population whose opinions are worth counting. We shall rely upon them to temper the violence and discredit the excesses of the extremists by the weight of their character and the force of their influence. In short, we must enlist them on our side, and to gain this advantage I would venture upon material concessions. I would make a bid for their confidence by proving that we have confidence in their attachment to the British rule; and I think that the appointment of a native member to the Executive Council would prove that we trust them. I do not undervalue the objections that have been raised against such an appointment; the embarrassment that it might cause in the conduct of business in the Viceroy's Council; the undesirability of entrusting the native member with secrets of

State; the difficulty of selecting an Indian with adequate merit, ability, and integrity; or of choosing one who will honestly represent the interests of both Hindus and Mahomedans. But these objections are to my mind of comparatively secondary importance and partly technical, and I think that we have no right to assume their validity beforehand; while to admit arguments of this sort as conclusive against making the appointment would be to shut the door indefinitely against an Indian member, since they can always be revived to defeat a proposal to appoint him. I am convinced that the introduction of Indians to places of real and high importance in our Government is a step that must be taken sooner or later—however long we may postpone it—because their assistance and co-operation in the arduous task of governing modern India is essentially needed, and I should prefer to take it soon rather than later. The proper decision would be, in my opinion, to accept some risk of inconveniences and disadvantages, and to treat objections founded upon them as necessarily superseded by considerations of higher statesmanship.

Lyall was also interested in the movement against woman suffrage, and became a member of the Association of which Lord Cromer was President. For the rest he enjoyed going with his son to the Levee, to the dinners of the "Political" service and Central Asian Society, and elsewhere. One sad event, however, threw a gloom over the close of the season. On the 1st of July occurred the tragic murder of Curzon Wyllie,[1] one of the most unselfish and kindest of men. "It has keenly distressed me," Lyall writes in his diary, "an old friend for whose character I had a strong regard."

[1] Lieut.-Colonel Sir William Curzon Wyllie, K.C.I.E., C.S.I.

The late summer months were spent at a house he had taken—Flitwick Manor, near Ampthill, with occasional visits to other places,—for example, to Manchester, where the University conferred upon him the degree of Doctor of Letters; and then he was back in London working at the Charity Organisation Society, lecturing on the Reading of History to the Women Students of London University, writing for the British Academy a paper on Sir Spencer Walpole, and for 'The Edinburgh Review' an article on Ollivier's Empire Libéral.

His heart was now giving him increasing trouble, and pain. He was told that though nothing could be done for him he might, if careful, live a quiet life for some years, and he writes, "This is sufficient for me." But he felt that the end might come at any time; and his diary for November contains an entry which is hard to read with dry eyes. He goes to Charing Cross one morning with his sons, the younger returning to India at the end of his leave; and Lyall writes—

> His stay of nine months has given us at home much pleasure, so I hope he has been happy; I hardly expect to see his face again. "Sis memor nostri."

It has been noticed more than once that Lyall had not a very high opinion of Eton education; and among his letters of this year is one to Mr Arthur Elliot, in which he says roundly that in his time at Eton mind and body were equally left to take care of themselves. But there is also a letter to Lord Tennyson which

may be worth quoting as a set-off to this unfavourable view. Referring to the competition among boys for school honours, he writes—

> That eagerness to be placed high in examinations is distinctly injurious to young boys, and I wish it were not so much encouraged by the present system in schools and elsewhere. I believe that the success of Etonians in after life is largely due to the fact that up till quite lately there was no racing for prizes, so that the ingenuous youth did not strain their mental powers prematurely.

In the latter part of this year, 1909, it became evident that a General Election would shortly take place; and, being a candidate, I had some talks with Lyall on the subject. He was, as ever, sympathetic and helpful; and, as ever, unable to take a "good party view" of the questions dividing the two sides. The Budget of 1909 he regarded with apprehension, as a Socialist measure, the beginning of a general attack upon the rights of property; but he thought the attitude of the House of Lords was dangerously defiant and uncompromising. He was a convinced Free Trader, and regarded the fiscal arguments of the Tariff Reformers as sophistries which were never likely to convince the nation; nor did he believe in Preference as a bond of union for the Empire; but on the other hand he was, as ever, steadily opposed to Home Rule for Ireland, holding that firm government, with a stern repression of organised crime and disorder, had done, and would do, more to benefit the country than any measure of parliamentary separation. His sympathies were therefore

divided; and though he voted as a Liberal, he did so only after careful thought.

As showing the breadth of his interests, some passages are quoted from letters addressed to M. de Kerallain—

I am sending to you separately the first portion of the proof of a General Introduction to a volume which our Naval Records Society has just published. The remainder of the Introduction would have no particular interest for you, but I think you will like to see, from the pages sent, the very considerable influence that French writers on naval tactics and evolutions in the eighteenth century exercised on the development of English naval strategy, and the large use that we made of French ideas. It appears that France supplied the theories that England put into practice very successfully in the naval wars with your country. I do not know whether this is well known, even to experts in France, though, as the French Admiralty is a subscriber to our Naval Records Society, of which I have the honour to be a Vice-President, it is possible that some notice of the facts stated in the pages that I am sending you would attract attention in France. . . .

Undoubtedly the Revolution ruined the French Navy, yet I have seen indications, in naval history, that under the old *régime* the aristocratic naval officers, belonging to a privileged class, were occasionally insubordinate and slow to obey even such admirals as Suffren; so that the fleet did not always act with effective union in a battle. . . .

I read the 'Revue des deux Mondes' regularly; there have been some good articles on the situation in Turkey, based on personal knowledge and information; and I wish Taine had finished his educational story. But what interests me most are E. Ollivier's accounts of the proceedings and exact circumstances of the ministry that plunged France into that fatal war of 1870. It is keenly painful to think how

easily might have been avoided a disastrous collision that has broken down the balance of powers in Europe, and altered the whole course of its history. . . .

I myself have become the Chairman of the Charity Organisation Society, which devotes itself to the arduous enterprise of regulating the relief of the poor by opposing indiscriminate gifts of money, and upholding the principle that men should labour to earn their own living by thrift. You will easily understand that in these Socialistic times we have a difficult and unpopular task. Between Socialists and Women Suffragists the commonwealth is much vexed and troubled. . . .

I am really touched, and, of course, earnestly interested, by hearing from you that M. —— found pleasure in reading Vamadeo's letters on his death-bed. There is in France, as I have more than once perceived, a capacity for quick and even ardent sympathy with ideas, that does not exist to the same degree among Englishmen. . . . I wish that there were sure prospect for us all, Christians, Academicians, and Bramins, who in this world are given to calm discussions of questions relating to futurity, of meeting again in some new stage of existence to compare notes, and to discover which of us has come nearest to the solution of the great enigma. I am honoured by the notice bestowed by French critics on 'Asiatic Studies.' But clearly I owe to your translation whatever interest the book may have attracted in France. . . .

You know that in our country we do not nourish hostility against Catholic writers on scientific subjects, and in matters pertaining to religions it is quite possible that a devout believer of his own faith may see and understand some things more plainly than the amiable and intelligent sceptic. I have known one or two missionaries in India whose knowledge of Hinduism was superior. On the other hand, the ordinary Englishman has a prejudice against heretics—he does not approve outspoken attacks upon the text of his Bible or the miracles of even the Old Testament. If Loisy

had been an Englishman, I doubt whether he would have obtained a Chair in any university here. . . .

I have to acknowledge with many thanks the Polybiblion, and I have read the notice of your 'Études sur les Mœurs' with appreciation. It is satisfactory that the reviewer holds me to have broken to pieces 'The Golden Bough.' In England that book is still venerated as the Gospel of true Folk-lore. . . .

I trust you do not suppose us English to be indulging in the *niaiserie* of believing that other nations love or even like us. We know very well that we have never inspired affection; that we must be well content if we are respected as fairly honest in peace and able to give a good account of our enemies in war. We know that our neighbours believe us to be essentially egoists in politics,—my own belief is that in that respect no nation is better than another. The Germans think themselves superior to us intellectually, and better organised for fighting; and I have been told on good authority that at times they fear we shall attack them —that we shall destroy their fleet before it grows larger and stronger. An English Bismarck would certainly propose to do this. I am not sure that the idea would have been rejected here 100 years ago, remembering that we seized the Danish fleet in 1809[1] or thereabouts, but now the proposal would be universally condemned.

Here in England the parliamentary battle goes on fiercely over the Socialistic Budget. Most of us who have any property are opposed to it. I myself believe that it will be the first open step toward an assault upon capital, and that it is economically pernicious. . .

The inauguration of your ancestor, Bougainville, must have given you some real feeling of pride and pleasure, and I am very glad that two British warships assisted. You will, I hope, allow that the English still keep up the old tradition,

[1] 1807.

so strong in France also, of gentlemanly manners between antagonists, past and present. . . .

Lyall was now seventy-five years of age, and a great-grandfather. He begins his diary for 1910 with an entry commenting upon the fact that four generations of his family have been successively exported to India; and, as noticed earlier, one at least of his uncles had died there; so that India had seen five generations of his blood. It is an exceptional family record.

He was at this time far from well; Lady Lyall's health was causing him some anxiety, and the winter seemed to have tried him also. He did not talk about it, but he looked occasionally as if he were suffering, and his heart was, in fact, giving him increasing trouble. Though he continued to work at his various societies and at literature, the warnings became more frequent as the months went on, and he found it necessary to withdraw from many of his social engagements. Still, he was a busy man. I find him, in January alone, taking the chair at an Anti-Suffrage Committee, attending Lord Cromer's Address to the Classical Association at King's College, lecturing on Indian History to the women students there, finishing his Ollivier article for the 'Edinburgh,' visiting his friend and editor Arthur Elliot at Freshwater Bay, sending off the last corrected proofs of a new edition of the 'British Dominion in India,' writing a paper on Asiatic History, attending business boards, presiding at a Dulwich College Committee,

going to a Council of the Central Asian Society, and from that to a British Academy meeting, and finishing the month with an afternoon's work as Chairman of the Charity Organisation Society. For a man of seventy-five this was not an inactive life.

It was, in fact, more than he could manage; and in the course of the spring he found himself obliged to resign his office as Chairman of the Charity Organisation Society. It had brought him some useful work, and some interesting acquaintances; but he was connected with so many other societies that he felt he could not do justice to the work.

The death of King Edward VII. in May of this year found Lyall in London, and he attended the memorable meeting of the Privy Council on the 7th, signing with other Councillors the Proclamation of Accession. It was almost his last official act.

A ten days' visit to Aix-les-Bains shortly afterwards did him good, and he enjoyed it, as he always did a change to the Continent. He returned with fresh vigour to his London life; and though obliged to be more and more careful about taking exercise, allowed himself for a time considerable latitude in accepting invitations. He mentions in his diary dining at "The Club" and various other places, and seems to have been glad to return to his old ways. But more than once his heart weakness forced him to cancel engagements, and gradually he became disinclined to accept them. Few of his friends knew at this time how much pain he was suffering, or how great the danger was; for he was always

reserved about such matters; but he was himself under no illusions. He faced the prospect bravely, determined to go on to the end showing a calm front, and getting all the healthy pleasure he could from what remained of his life.

In August he was once more at Aldworth, and there he spent nearly three months of the late summer, receiving visits from many friends. Among them was the Hon. Emily Lawless, who afterwards wrote of her stay as "a time which has ever since remained extraordinarily bright against the background." She had been a friend for many years.[1] He found that he could now do little walking, and often for days hardly left the garden; but though obliged to be careful, he was working as usual at his literature. He had undertaken to write an Introduction to Mr Valentine Chirol's book on Indian Unrest. He was also writing for 'The Edinburgh Review' an article on European Dominion in Asia. And after his return to town in October he resumed the course of his attendance at society meetings. He resumed, too, his dining out, and once more his diary shows a considerable number of evenings spent away from home. His interest in public affairs was as keen as ever, and there was little outward indication of illness or depression. I remember dining with him in December, a small and very pleasant party, and it seemed to me that I had never seen him in better spirits. Yet at

[1] A little later he sent to her a piece of hers which she had forgotten. He had cut it out from an old magazine and kept it. "May I add a protest," he writes, "against your taking small care of true poetry?"

this time his heart trouble had increased so greatly that he had even to give up playing bridge, as he found it brought on pain.

The following passages are taken from his letters of this year:—

To M. de Kerallain—

You will have seen by our newspapers that Mr Roosevelt's speech at the Guild Hall, where I was present, has not altogether pleased the English public. To me it did not seem actually disagreeable, though I thought him rather presumptuous in undertaking to lecture the citizens of London upon the affairs of the British empire, and it was clear to me that Roosevelt did not understand the complex and delicate conditions of our situation in Egypt, and elsewhere in Asia. . . .

Egypt is giving us much trouble, but it is a small matter by comparison with India; we can master Egyptian sedition whenever we choose to use force—though I should not be sorry if we could find a pretext for throwing off that burden, with honour. As for our situation here at home—there is much truth in the observation that the Celtic element predominates among our leading men; though this is counteracted by an infusion of the Scotch caution and sagacity. But we English are being hurried on faster than suits our traditions. I cannot tell what may be done about the House of Lords; there is a very distinct divergence of aims and purposes between the two parliamentary Houses. The Lords have drawn up a Bill which, if it passed, would reform and thus strengthen their House. The Bill which the Commons are pressing onward is intended to weaken the Upper House. They have no intention of strengthening it. Moderate people hope for some compromise.

To Edward Clodd, Esq.—

You are a bold man to undertake Totemism, though I shall

look forward to the article. It is a subject that has run wild and needs critical compression. The defect, usually, in the application of the scientific or comparative method to loose barbarous ideas or institutions is the straining of fanciful analogies, the collection of a quantity of facts really unrelated to the main subject and apart in their genesis, which are hauled in by the ears to support a favourite theory. By this system you can discover Totemism in the most unexpected similarities of practice. Take the title of Dauphin. We are told that the Dolphin was the heraldic crest of the Seigneur who in the middle ages held the lands afterwards belonging to the province of Dauphiné—it became a patronymic in the Seigneurial family some time in the 12th century. After passing through various lordships, the lands were finally ceded to a French king, on condition, it is said, that his eldest son should always bear the title of Dauphin. Here, for the theorist, is a fine instance of the transmission and survival of the family Totem, if only the true origin were not historical, though perhaps you will say that it *is* an instance of historical Totemism.

To Countess Martinengo Cesaresco—

. . . My years to come must be few. . . . The latest years of a life ought at least to bring tranquillity, when one's work is finished, and one can look for no changes of fortune, except in the loss of friends or kinsfolk. . . .

About our home politics I have little to say. Democracy is in the ascendant, and likely, I think, to prevail in England as elsewhere. When Demos has discovered his power, I don't see how he is to be deterred from using it vigorously, though he may get a check now and then. The Lords are now digesting the bitter fruit of their blunder in throwing out the Budget. . . .

In India we have for the moment a lull, and I have some hope that by skilful statesmanship we may soothe the unrest for a time; but the problem of holding that vast population

by relays of Englishmen chosen by competitive examination at home is of prodigious difficulty. To my mind our best chance lies in enlisting the Indians of real influence and high capacity into co-operation for the support of our Government, but this must be done gradually, though it ought to have been begun long ago.

I am more and more plagued by a weakness of the heart, to the extent that almost forbids any exertion; for a very slight walk gives me pain, and I fear that I can undertake no more journeys, since even the mounting of a London staircase is becoming arduous. . . .

I have been looking over La Banca's booklet, that you kindly sent to me. He is in some respects a rationalist, treating Jesus as a great moral teacher (wherein I thoroughly agree with him) and rejecting all dogma. That Jesus was a real historical personage is, to my mind, beyond question. I should have thought that point needed, in the present day, no demonstration; and, as I have said to you before, I take him to have been one of the greatest spiritual messengers who have appeared so frequently in Asia, never in Europe, at any rate not as the founders of any far-spreading faith. But it has not yet been proved that any moral ideal, independent of "confessioni dogmatiche," can take hold of the popular mind.

In June of this year Lyall had written to a friend, "I myself intend to stand by the Liberal flag as long as may be reasonably possible"; but the action of the Government in introducing the Parliament Bill, with the avowed purpose of granting Home Rule to Ireland, convinced him that the time had come when he must vote against his party; and in November he agreed to join his friend Arthur Elliot, who had come to the same conclusion, in a letter to 'The Times' explaining their views. "I fear," Lyall wrote, "that my signa-

ture will have little political value," but he signed the letter, which appeared on the 26th November, under the signature of Arthur Elliot, A. C. Lyall, and Henry Hobhouse.

As this was one of the last important acts of Lyall's life, and a good example of the bent of his mind with regard to party questions, the letter is given below.

FREE TRADERS AND THE GENERAL ELECTION.

TO THE EDITOR OF 'THE TIMES.'

SIR,—Only a few months ago at the late General Election we, as Unionist Free Traders, thought it our duty to support Liberal candidates where that could be done without seriously endangering the cause of the Union. We believe that the same action was taken by large numbers of Unionist Free Traders in all parts of the country; and it is surely a justification of that action that the Parliament then elected and now to be dissolved did for the time being secure Free Trade and did not endanger the Union. We believed that the main issues before the electors last January were Free Trade versus Protection, and the approval or rejection of the novel claim of the House of Lords to exercise authority over Money Bills, even over the annual Budget. On these issues a large number of Liberal Unionists and Unionist Free Traders thought that the Government were in the right, and held these views, which we shared, strongly.

By the present Dissolution, taken on a worn-out register, involving the disfranchisement of many thousands of the electorate, the Government, we consider, have changed the issue. They have hastily appealed to the country to support them in their main policy, which appears to us directed towards seriously weakening the efficiency of a Second

Chamber. If they succeed in carrying this, they obviously intend to satisfy their Irish supporters by the introduction of a Bill to establish a National Parliament and Executive Government in Ireland. The Free Trade cause, however useful it may prove to the Liberal Party, will necessarily at the present election occupy a subordinate position to these other two issues.

As regards the Constitutional question, we think that the speeches of Mr Balfour, Lord Lansdowne, and Lord Rosebery, and, still more, the liberal and patriotic spirit shown by the House of Lords itself, promise a far better prospect of a reasonable and statesmanlike settlement of the Constitutional difficulty than the passing of the Parliament Bill, a measure which, whatever may be intended by some of its authors, is being advocated in certain quarters as virtually establishing a Single Chamber system.

We desire, ourselves, to see a reformed, enlightened, and generally representative Second Chamber, not interfering with finance, but exercising some control over legislation, and ensuring that no reforms of vital or Constitutional importance should be passed without the clear and decided expression of the desire of the constituencies on those issues.

What action, then, should be taken by those who hold such views? There will no doubt be exceptional constituencies in which the contest will turn, mainly or entirely, on the Tariff issue. Here it may be too much to expect Unionists who are strong Free Traders to set aside, for the emergency, their convictions on Free Trade. But, speaking generally, we consider that those who sympathise with the opinions we have expressed will be acting wisely in supporting Unionist candidates at the present election.

* *November* 25, 1910.

Lyall's last year opened sadly. Two of his friends had lately died, S. H. Butcher and F. Whitting.

Lyall attended the memorial service for the former at St Margaret's, Westminster, and writes under date the 3rd January—

I had an earnest regard for him, and had known him for some years. He was one of those with whom I desired to cultivate close friendship.

Two days later he was at Cambridge attending the memorial service to Whitting.

At 2.30 service in the Chapel, and procession after the coffin to the College gate, where Nunc Dimittis was sung. Whitting and I, born in the same year, were at Eton together, and bracketed together for Select in the Newcastle Examination. After my return from India in 1888 we renewed our friendship, and often met at Cambridge.

Returned to London, Lyall was at once busy again. On the 6th he writes—

To Henley's Board, then to meet Lord Morley at the St James's Club, where I gave him lunch. Two hours of talk.

So the diary goes on, with entries about the affairs of the Charity Organisation Society, about pictures for Dulwich Gallery, about meetings of the Central Asian Society Council and the Mahomedan Association, about one or two country visits, about dinners at the Literary Society, Grillion's, "The Club," and elsewhere. In February he drives down twice to Wimbledon to inquire for his old friend Sir Charles Elliott, then ill. He is appointed a trustee of the British Museum, the last of the many offices pressed upon him; takes the chair of the English Literature

Committee; attends a British Academy meeting for the election of members and foreign correspondents, and so on. In March I find him going down to Putney Heath, to make inquiries about the sudden death of a poor ex-Jesuit whom he had befriended, "A most tragic end of a kindly and cultured man. Miserrimus." During this month Lyall was still dining out frequently, and still occasionally playing bridge at the Athenæum; but he writes, "I must give up the game, at the Club, but it is becoming no easy matter to find occupation for my afternoons in London."

That with his love of literature he should have suffered, as he did all his life, from this want of "occupation" seems curious; but the fact was, that he did not care to do any one thing for long at a time. Even reading, for hours together, tired or rather bored him. His quick, restless mind wanted frequent change. But it should be remarked that he had accustomed himself for many years to read only, or almost only, what was really worth reading; and what is really worth reading generally requires a closeness of attention which cannot be indefinitely prolonged.

His literary work was going on as usual. Both in January and in April of this year he had an article in 'The Edinburgh Review'; the first on "European Dominion in Asia," the second on "The Conflict of Colour"; and a new edition of the 'British Dominion in India,' had lately been published. He was also preparing to write, at the request of Lord Tennyson,

a paper upon the relations between Alfred Tennyson and Edward FitzGerald, which paper was to have been published in a new edition of Lord Tennyson's Memoir of his father.

Regarding FitzGerald, Lyall was corresponding with Edward Clodd, who lived not far from FitzGerald's old home at Woodbridge, and was, like Lyall, a member of the Omar Khayyám Club, and a warm admirer of FitzGerald's translation of the 'Rubayyát.' Lyall was also in correspondence with Clodd about the article on Totemism, which has been already mentioned; and in a long letter, dated the 2nd February 1911, he discusses this article with the care and thought he was always ready to give to a friend's work.

My acquaintance with the literature of Totemism and anthropology generally is so slight that I can offer none but a few superficial remarks on your article, which is full of substance.

P. 2. I presume the passage marked by me A. is a quotation from Galton, though it is not so marked. Might not one express a critical doubt whether he is right in saying that in his Cambridge days many of the best-informed men believed the whole history of the early world was in the Pentateuch? Galton was born in 1822, and the 'Vestiges of Creation,' by Chambers, appeared in 1824, and produced a profound sensation. Moreover, from an earlier date in the 19th century the history of organic life had been much discussed by scientific men. If you agree, I think you might put in a caveat.

All that I could venture to say about Totemism and Taboo is contained in that chapter iv. of 'Asiatic Studies' from which you have quoted a sentence; see also a few lines in the preface to vol. ii. With your survey of the authorities on

these subjects I can't venture to meddle. My opinion, if it must be given candidly, is that while you have set out an excellent account of the various theories and conclusions formed by investigators upon the data collected, you have not given us quite enough of your own criticism. . . .

My own notion is that the anthropologists are apt to go too far back for the explanation of such institutions as Taboo and Exogamy. I guess that in the course of many ages the original ideas became profoundly modified by change of circumstance and conditions. The absolute necessity of obtaining wives by capture seems to me to account sufficiently for the exogamic custom, though of course not entirely. See, for instance, the story at the end of the last chapter of the Book of Judges. The tribe of Benjamin, hitherto, as one makes out, endogamic, is compelled to carry off the women of another tribe. They had lost all their women, and this misfortune must have been common in times when women and cattle were always the prize of the victor. It is not hard to believe that this constant need of capture grew into a tribal ordinance. . . . On page twenty-three you allude briefly to the continuity of belief in psychical identity between man and "brute." Could you not enlarge on this? The growth of civilisation tends to obliterate the familiar intercourse between men and animals, which is closest, I think, in the wilder stages of humanity, when the ways of human and animal life differ not materially. The ignorance about animals in cultured English society is now amazing. I quite agree with the Blackfeet that animals have a reasoning faculty; and I think that the close and constant association of primitive and uncivilised men and animals had very much to do with the origin of Totems, Taboo, and animal worship generally.

A little later, to M. de Kerallain—

It is very satisfactory to hear that your son is enjoying his Indian journey, and has found hospitality among the

acquaintances whom he has made. Sir Louis Dane's influence will have been very useful to him in exploring the Punjab; and I hope he has made good use of his opportunities for reconnoitring the Afghan Frontier. It is always a novel sensation to meet for the first time the real barbarian, who carries his life in his hand, and is quite prepared to shoot a stranger on his land, as readily as the civilised sportsman would slay a deer. In Rajputana your son will have seen a survival of medieval India, while Agra and Delhi will recall by their architecture the glories of the Moghul. This is a fine picturesque way of studying Oriental history, bringing it up to date by the contrast of the methods and results of utilitarian British administration. The contrast, not to say collision, of old and new ideas will aid him to a comprehension of the problems which we English are endeavouring to solve in dealing with various races and religions under a modern Empire. The article in 'The Edinburgh Review,' which you mention, was written by me on this subject. I am by no means satisfied with it as an attempt to show the difficulties in ancient no less than in modern times of rulership by Europeans in Asia. . . .

My wife has been rather seriously ill, so I am living very quietly at present, and I am going seldom into the world of London. Meanwhile I have been elected to be one of the Trustees, or Governing Body, of the British Museum, an honour of which I feel very unworthy, since I have no pretensions either to science or scholarship; and I confess that I have never been attracted by archæology. My erudite colleagues will soon discover my superficiality.

Of Lyall's letters which have been sent by his friends this is almost the latest. It is in small and not very clear writing. The last of all is one of the 9th April, written to Miss Gertrude Bell from Lord Tennyson's house at Freshwater—

Your letter from Bagdad reached me just before I left London for this place, where I am always most hospitably treated. I ought to have replied long ago to your former letter from Damascus—pray believe that I set high value on your letters, as tokens of our friendship—but since February I have been troubled by my wife's serious illness; luckily she is now much better, though still in bed.

In this second letter you have passed over very quietly the numerous hardships and incidents of the adventurous journey across the desert, of which I should have known nothing if Lady Bell had not lent me a copy of your letter to her, which gives a most lively and picturesque narrative of real Asiatic travel, and of your resources in contending with difficulties, the whole of it suffused by your innate joy in the desert air and in the ways of primitive folk. As a paper in some high-class magazine it would be a prize to the intelligent editor, but I have not yet seen your article in last month's 'Blackwood,' having only just heard of it from Lady Bell. I see that you have taken kindly to the Oriental habit of consoling yourself for unmerited misfortunes by pious ejaculations, and putting them down to Destiny, while Allah gets the credit of any good luck. This is a philosophy which the progress of Western civilisation in Asia is gradually undermining. Energetic Governors, like George Curzon, take upon the Administration the responsibility for plague, famine, and so on, with the result that the Asiatic concludes that the Government has undertaken the business of the Gods, and is obviously breaking down. I have been much interested by what you have written, in both letters, regarding the marked improvement of Turkish administration under the new *régime*. It seems to me that the party now in power is doing the right thing; the leaders have set up a façade of constitutionalism, and are building up behind it a solid fabric of strong government backed by military force. This is, I think, the only method by which the transition can be managed if it is ever to supervene. And, of course, they are prompted, as you say, by that intense desire to be rid of European domination which is

stirring all Asia; they are following the lead of Japan in taking what they really need from Europe, that they may destroy the schoolmaster after profiting by his lessons. The same notion is rife in India, but there the military force is in *our* hands, and if we withdrew it or lost hold of it the educated native would be swept away by barbarians. "En révolution les honnêtes gens sont toujours balayés" is the saying of a Frenchman who had seen rough times. Asia will take long to set in order; the kingdoms have no settled frontiers except where Europeans have laid them down, just as the religions have no formal creed or articles of faith excepting the brief profession of Islam; and, as you observe, there is no stable public opinion — how can there be, in populations varying indefinitely as to race or religion, where nationalities do not yet exist?

I can give you no home news that others will not have sent. No one pretends to foresee how the contest over the Veto Bill will end, people vaguely hope for some compromise. In the House of Commons the fighting grows hot, the temper of the country at large continues to be phlegmatic, with an inclination to acquiesce wearily in Irish Home Rule. The Lords have proposed a Referendum, as a device for hobbling the feet of the Commons. I myself am altogether hostile to it. The "Will of the People" seems to be illusory,—the people, rightly, expect to be told what their will should be. You must not carry political fictions too far.

The Suffragettes are using all the rope they can get to hang themselves; they camped out in the streets on Census night, and performed various antics.

I am somewhat vexed by the hardening of my arteries, and can walk only very short distances. . . . I trust you continue well and strong, we shall look out for another book next year? Meanwhile, remember that your letters give me very real pleasure, and that I am always your affectionate friend.

The last entry in his diary shows a well-filled day—

To Henley's meeting. Thence to Dieudonné's Restaurant, where I gave lunch to Lady (Neville) Lyttelton. Then for half an hour to Academic Committee, large meeting to hear Haldane from the Chair, and Gilbert Murray's oration on poor H. Butcher. Afterwards Dulwich Board, &c., from 3.45 to 5.30. A and B to dinner.

Lady Lyttelton writes about their lunch together—

We had such fun, laughed and talked endlessly, and he promised to come to us for Whitsuntide. I miss him continuously. He was *such* a counsellor and friend.

I had seen Lyall a few days before, when we found ourselves sitting side by side at a Council meeting of the Central Asian Society. He spoke, at rather unusual length for him, about a matter in which he was interested; but, with his usual respect for the views of others, did not press his own when he found that there was some difference of opinion. After the meeting broke up we walked back together towards Queen's Gate. He walked slowly, but seemed quite well, and talked with his usual brightness about Indian affairs. When we parted he asked me to come to dinner some day soon, but unluckily a note received the next day invited me for an evening on which I was already engaged. I never saw him again. In the early part of April I went over to Switzerland, to stay with his old friend Rivett-Carnac, and the day after I arrived, as we were walking through the streets of Vevey, Rivett-Carnac took a 'Times' from a servant and opened it. The first thing he saw was the announcement of Lyall's death.

I learned afterwards that on the 8th of April Lyall had gone down to Farringford to spend two or three days with Lord Tennyson, and discuss the FitzGerald article. The day was fine but cold; and the crossing in the boat, or the walk up the long pier, had tried him, for it was noticed that he got into the carriage with difficulty, and turned very white. But the attack soon passed off, and by the time he arrived at the house he seemed to have completely recovered. Lady Tennyson had, as she told him, given him "his own room," from which he could look out over the downs and hear the sound of the sea. At dinner she thought he was particularly bright and cheerful, and afterwards he sat up late with Lord Tennyson, smoking and talking. The next morning he drove over to Mr Arthur Elliot's house half a mile off, and spent a couple of hours there. They had, Mr Elliot said, "a delightful morning," but, short as the distance was, Lyall sent for a carriage to take him back. He passed the rest of the day, a beautiful spring day, wandering about the garden, or talking with some of the other guests in the house, and seemed to be thoroughly enjoying himself. Dr Warren, of Magdalen, who was one of them, writes: "I have never known him more engaging, more wise and clear, and to the point, and at the same time so genial." The last of his letters, given above, must have been written in the course of this afternoon. He finished the evening as usual by sitting up with Lord Tennyson in the smoking-room. When he went to bed at midnight he took with him to his room Elliot's 'Life of Lord Goschen,' then just

out. Early next morning when his servant, Boyes, came in to call him he was awake, reading a book of Maeterlinck's, but he said he felt unwell, and had better return to town. He then got up. A few minutes later there was the sound of a fall, and when his door was opened he was found lying on the floor dead. The weak heart had failed. He was spared what would have been a great trial to him, a lingering illness, and he died among the truest of friends.

Many years before he had written from India that to die as his father had died, and to be laid in the old churchyard on the hill above Canterbury, seemed almost enviable. It is there that he now lies.

There is little more for me to say. Alfred Lyall lived longer than the three-score years and ten allotted to man, and his life was a full and varied one. I think also that in spite of his restlessness and occasional discontent it was as happy as a man's life ever is. He did not attain the position which he might perhaps have attained if he had not chosen an Indian career. But he was as successful in his official work as a man could well hope to be, and he won exceptional distinction in literature. The years he spent in England after his retirement were, perhaps, the most contented of all. With his simple tastes he had enough of the world's goods; "and that which should accompany old age, as honour, love, obedience, troops of friends," he had in fullest measure.

If in matters of dogma he had found no sure foot-

hold, his faith was one which brought serenity of spirit. No one who saw him during the closing period of his life could doubt that he became year by year more reverent, more gentle, more unselfish, and therefore happier. There is not much wrong with a man's religion if that can be said of him.

He had his faults, and I have not tried to conceal them; but as I sit writing the story of his life, and thinking of him, in the house where the sense of his presence still lingers, it seems to me that among the men I have known there have been few of such rare qualities and charm, and not one who had the power of inspiring, in those who really knew him, a deeper trust and affection.

CHAPTER XVII.

LITERARY WORK.

Enumeration of writings—Effect of official life on quantity and quality—Truthfulness—Verses—Tennyson's opinion—Passages quoted—Prose writings—Personality shown by them—Works separately examined—Lyall's choice of essays for republication.

BEFORE closing this memoir it is necessary to say something more about Lyall's literary work, by which he is best known in England, and now, perhaps, even in India. It will no doubt in the future be his foremost title to remembrance.

I have touched upon the subject repeatedly in the course of the preceding chapters, for literature, of one sort or another, was a part of his life throughout; and no memoir of him would be truthful if the thread of literature did not run through it from end to end. These frequent references to his writings, and the many opinions recorded about them by competent critics, make it almost superfluous to add a general review of this side of his life. The following pages therefore are largely of the nature of an enumeration and summary.

His verse,—all that he thought worth publishing,—is to be found in one small volume containing little

more than thirty poems, none of which are long. He wrote others, and he had no objection to being credited with them; but he did not think any of them would add to the value of the book. His prose output is much more considerable. It includes five books published under his name—

'Asiatic Studies,' in two volumes; 'Warren Hastings,' for the "English Men of Action" series; 'Alfred Tennyson,' for "English Men of Letters"; 'The Life of the Marquis of Dufferin and Ava,' in two volumes; and the 'Rise and Expansion of the British Dominion in India.'

He also delivered several important lectures, and contributed to various reviews and periodicals, in England and in India, a great number of articles. Some of these papers are republished in 'Asiatic Studies,' and some are incorporated in the 'British Dominion.' No attempt will be made to give a complete list of them, for many were of temporary interest, and many cannot now be traced; but it is worth noting that he contributed to 'The Fortnightly Review' fifteen articles, to the 'Quarterly' four, and to the 'Edinburgh' no less than twenty-five.

It will be seen that when all is said Lyall's total literary production, as compared with that of some other writers, is not large; but it is to be remembered that literature was not the only, nor indeed the primary, work of his life. Until he was sixty-eight years of age he was an official, and during part of that time a fairly hard-worked official, with a material part of his day devoted to official duties. In India

especially, where there are many disadvantages of climate and surroundings, and where, even during periods of comparative leisure, he was never free from the burden of responsibility, literary production on a large scale would have been practically impossible.

The conditions which limited the quantity of Lyall's literary work had an important effect upon its quality. His writings, whether in verse or prose, show throughout the hand not of a literary man pure and simple, but of a man of action with literary tastes. It is possible that they lack in some measure the finish, the perfection of technique, which as a rule comes only by long and incessant practice at one craft; certainly they are full of the knowledge, and marked by the tone of thought, which can be acquired only by taking a part in the affairs of the world. Whether the gain outweighs the loss, or the loss outweighs the gain, may be disputed; but in any case, as one would expect, the loss is more apparent in verse, where perfection of form counts for so much, while the gain shows more clearly in prose. There, indeed, it is not easy to detect any loss at all; Lyall's work seems to compare not unfavourably in the matter of finish with that of most professional men of letters.

Apart from this question, the main characteristic of Lyall's work, both in verse and prose, is its truthfulness, its careful regard for the realities of life. Though he had to an unusual degree the gift of imagination, he never allowed himself to be tempted too far from the region of the known or the knowable.

He "detested subjective poetry"; basing his poems mainly on some definite incident or scene; and the accuracy of his local colour is scrupulously maintained. With all his love of reflection and meditation, his incessant study was history. Religion had for his mind the strongest attraction; his thought was constantly drawn towards the things which are not of this world; he had a deep and sympathetic insight into the attitude of the mystic. Yet, even here, what he was always seeking was a solid foothold, "a working philosophy of religion." Of theories in general he had an instinctive distrust. He could see the æsthetic beauty of them, when they had beauty, but unless they were based on ascertained facts they were not for him. This constant respect for the truth was evident in the manner as well as the matter of his writings. His dislike of exaggeration was almost excessive. It deprived him to some extent of the warmth and brilliancy which are now so often attained even by inferior writers; but it gave him a certain dignity of style which, lightened as it was by quiet humour, made all he wrote singularly attractive. His literary work, whether in verse or prose, leaves in the mind of any careful reader a feeling not only of keen pleasure but of conviction and confidence.

His verses were mostly written during his service in India, and deal largely with Indian subjects. The last edition of his published volume, if compared with the printed but unpublished collection of 'Verses Written in India,' which was circulated among his friends in 1887, shows some changes and additions.

It can hardly serve any useful purpose to go into this matter at length; but I find that the published volume omits three pieces, "Sky Races in the Grecian Camp before Troy," "The Lorraine Widow's Dirge," and "Swinburne in Islam"; while it includes six new pieces: "Somnia," "Stanzas for the Omar Khayyám Club," "Siva," "A Hard Bargain," "Inscription," and the first of the "Horatian Reminiscences." The omitted pieces contain some fine lines, especially perhaps "Swinburne in Islam," the soliloquy of an Englishman who has turned Mahomedan; it begins—

> "I have cast my lot in a dolorous land;
> I wander in dusty and weariful ways,—
> Bare and burning the sky and the sand,
> Ever they circle my desolate days."

Hope he has little, and faith he has none; so he shakes off the trammels of the Western world, and throws himself into the life of the East, with its scorching love and its simple sins. The poem ends—

> "Oh far-off island where I was born!
> That pleasant land which I held in scorn;
> 'Tis little she cares if her exiles wrong her,
> Little she reckons our word or deed."

But Lyall was doubtless right to let this and the other two pieces join the number of those which he had set aside as not of his best.

The six added pieces are almost all on Indian or Oriental subjects, and one at least had been written in India.

The remaining differences between the two volumes are mostly slight—stops, accents, notes, spelling, verbal

changes, rearrangements of the order of pieces or stanzas, and the like. In two pieces, "Rajput Rebels," and "A Sermon in Lower Bengal," he has omitted, or altered for the worse, lines which, though powerful, had been criticised as unpatriotic and likely to do harm. The net result is that his published volume is not, either in bulk or in general character, very different from his 'Verses Written in India,' and it may be regarded as the work of an Indian official, inspired by Indian scenes and subjects.

It is difficult for any one who was in India, in the atmosphere of Lyall's poems, a generation ago, to escape from the influence of association, and consider them dispassionately. At that time many of us knew them by heart, and they are so familiar still, so redolent of old memories and old scenes, that one cannot feel impartial in speaking of them.

Mr Prothero in his commemorative address remarks that Lyall is not to be ranked with his great contemporaries—Tennyson, Browning, Swinburne, Rossetti; that his poetry is on a lower plane. And the poet Tennyson himself had not as high an opinion of Lyall's verse as some of those whose words have been quoted in earlier chapters. He thought much of it good—even "fine,"—for example, "Theology in Extremis" and "Badminton"; but he regarded some of it as wanting in finish. Tennyson's judgment on such a point is almost conclusive, and one can only say in extenuation that the standard of finish which he set for himself was so abnormally high that he may possibly have been inclined to expect too much from others.

Yet, apart from Tennyson's judgment, it may perhaps be admitted that in delicacy of ear at all events Lyall was not extraordinarily gifted. His verse has much delicacy of thought, feeling, and language, and as a rule it has an easy flow; but at times, in spite of the care and labour which he bestowed on his work, or because of them, the music is not perfect. He knew, none better, that "a good poet's made as well as born"; he spared no toil to write a living line; but he toiled rather for the sense than for the sound, and occasionally he seemed to let the music escape. For the rest, as Prothero urges, and Tennyson would have agreed, the small volume does contain, if not great poetry, as some hold, yet true poetry. Lyall had the lyrical emotion and the lyrical touch. No doubt much of his verse is reflective rather than passionate. Though there are spirited lines, and passages of unquestionable power, the feeling as a rule is tender and sad.

"Surely He pities who made the brain
When breaks that mirror of memories sweet,
When the hard blow falleth, and never again
Nerve shall quiver, nor pulse shall beat.
Bitter the vision of vanishing joys;
Surely He pities when man destroys."

That is the note so often struck, the note of pity and sadness, rather than the note of onset, or triumph, or fiery love. But it is not the only note—

"Ye have sought my aid and counsel, I must lead you, I must pray
That the God of Islam may restore your old imperial sway.
In the towns your fathers founded, in the provinces they named,
May revive a faith forgotten, and the rites that ye have maimed;

That he prosper your conspiracy and send his spirit forth,
On the Arab of the Deccan, and the Afghan of the north;
So the bayonet be dashed aside with the swing of a curved sword,
And ye reap a bloody harvest with the sickle of the Lord.

. . . . . .

Strong must your heart and your hand be, no time for soft dreams is before you;
Woe to the coward who sleeps when the darkness that bound him has flown,
Firm be your faith and your feet when the sun's burning rays shall be o'er you,
When the rifles are ranging in line, and the clear note of battle is blown."[1]

Lyall's best pieces do not lend themselves to quotation, but the following lines from "The Old Pindari" give a good example of his descriptive passages—

"It's many a year gone by now; and yet I often dream
Of a long dark march to the Jumna, of splashing across the stream,
Of the waning moon on the water, and the spears in the dim starlight,
As I rode in front of my mother, and wondered at all the sight.

Then, the streak of the pearly dawn—the flash of a sentinel's gun,
The gallop and glint of horsemen who wheeled in the level sun,
The shots in the clear still morning, the white smoke's eddying wreath;
Is this the same land that I live in, the dull dank air that I breathe?"

Any one who has lived in the country will feel the truth and beauty of these few words—

"Here, in this mystical India, the deities hover and swarm,
Like the wild bees heard in the tree-tops, or the gusts of a gathering storm;
In the air men hear their voices, their feet on the rocks are seen,
Yet we all say, 'Whence is the message, and what may the wonders mean?'"

[1] The unpublished edition has—

"When the Kafir is ranging his line, and the stern note of battle is blown."

There is much else in Lyall's verse; much that shows how he could enter into the spirit of the soldier; much also that shows his sympathy with the traditions and feelings of the people around him, and his deep insight into their ways of thought. Perhaps one of the most characteristic of his poems in that last respect is a study at Delhi, "The Hindu Ascetic," which is short enough to quote—

"Here as I sit by the Jumna bank,
Watching the flow of the sacred stream,
Pass me the legions, rank on rank,
And the cannon roar, and the bayonets gleam.

Is it a God or a King that comes?
Both are evil, and both are strong;
With women and worshipping, dancing and drums,
Carry your Gods and your Kings along.

Fanciful shapes of a plastic earth,
These are the visions that weary the eye;
These may I 'scape by a luckier birth,
Musing, and fasting, and hoping to die.

When shall these phantoms flicker away?
Like the smoke of the guns on the wind-swept hill,
Like the sounds and colours of yesterday:
And the soul have rest, and the air be still?"

The piece immediately following this, "Badminton," another study at Delhi, is worth quoting also, for the two are evidently meant to be read together; and they show how Lyall regarded the tendencies of the two faiths, the Hindu and Mahomedan. His personal sympathy was always with the first, which appealed

to his meditative and subtle mind, and it may be doubted whether he was ever just to the other. But the little piece is a good illustration of his feelings and manner—

"Hardly a shot from the gate we stormed,
Under the Moree battlement's shade;
Close to the glacis our game was formed,
There had the fight been, and there we played.

Lightly the demoiselles tittered and leapt,
Merrily capered the players all;
North, was the garden where Nicholson slept,
South, was the sweep of a battered wall.

Near me a Mussulmán, civil and mild,
Watched as the shuttlecocks rose and fell;
And he said, as he counted his beads and smiled,
'God smite their souls to the depths of hell.'"

It is a temptation to quote more, but these extracts will probably suffice to give to any one who does not know Lyall's verses some indication of their scope and quality.

That they came home to many men is certain, and to men of very different natures. If there was no overpowering rush about them, no fine careless rapture, or sensuous melody of words, there was something which penetrated and charmed. Above all, there was truth, and "Beauty is truth, truth beauty." He wrote too little to make a deep impression on the public in England, and his subjects are not familiar to the English reader; but in India he will not easily be forgotten.

The more vigorous and catching strains of Rudyard Kipling have perhaps to some extent overpowered his voice; otherwise he would have been the best known of Indian verse-writers. Though, for evident reasons, he would never have become to Englishmen in India the popular idol that a delightful but less original writer, Lindsay Gordon, has become to the Australians, he would have held an equally distinct position; and, among those at least who take a real interest in the country, his verses will not die.

Of Lyall's prose writings, the work by which he is best known is 'Asiatic Studies.' It is undoubtedly a book of the greatest interest and value to every man who wishes to know something of Asiatic thought, and especially of Indian thought. There is probably no work in the language which contains such a store of information with regard to the religions and philosophies of the East. Lyall brought to it qualities which are rarely found combined—a practical acquaintance with men and administrative affairs in India, a thorough knowledge of Indian history, an intense sympathy with Indian feeling and thought, a deep interest in religion, a singular freedom from prejudice, a keen sense of humour, and an inquiring contemplative habit which led him to search not only into facts but into the causes and correlation of facts. One rarely came away after hearing him talk without having learnt something, and this is the impression left whenever one comes into contact with his mind in reading these essays. They are informing and suggestive to an extraordinary degree, perhaps

even more so for one who has lived in India than for one who has not.

Mr Prothero has pointed out, with much insight and discrimination, the chief features of Lyall's literary work; and he remarks that Lyall's personality is shown perhaps most of all in the 'Studies.' This is comprehensible, for essays on religious and philosophical subjects gave greater scope for the exhibition of a man's innermost views and feelings than historical or biographical works can do. "And," he says, "it was a rich and complex personality . . . shot with strange hues and somewhat bewildering contrasts, with its underlying strain of melancholy and its delicate sensibility, its veiled humour and gentle irony; too sceptical for enthusiasm, too critical for worship; temperamentally indolent, but intellectually alert; humble, but independent; emotional, but intensely sane; bold in speculation, in action cautious, even hesitating; reserved and a little chilling to the newcomer, but capable of unbosoming itself with warm affection to intimate friends; easy and fascinating in conversation, but preserving always a certain aloofness from the outer world." This is keen-sighted and sound criticism. If it errs at all, it errs only where every one erred who did not know Lyall very well indeed—in not recognising that though perhaps "in action cautious, even hesitating," he could yet be, when necessary, both prompt and tenacious. The words "humble, but independent; emotional, but intensely sane," are singularly exact, if the word "humble" be meant, as it doubtless is, to express

humility without self-abasement. But perhaps these remarks are more suited to the earlier part of this memoir than to a chapter upon Lyall's literary work. It is more to the purpose here to quote Mr Prothero's assertion about the 'Asiatic Studies,' that "for the student of comparative religion, for all who desire to know, in particular, the religious mind of the Hindu, his work has rightly become a classic." 'And' this means much, for it is to be remembered that the religious mind of the Hindu is practically the whole mind of the Hindu, with whom religion permeates everything—is everything; and further, that the religious mind of the Hindu remains to a great extent unaltered even when he has accepted, or has had imposed upon him, creeds which cannot be included within the wide limits of Hinduism. The work, in fact, is a classic not only for the students of comparative religion, but for all who desire to know what India is—one might almost say what Asia is, for Indian religious thought has overflowed far beyond the limits of India.

I have spoken before of Lyall's historical work, 'The Rise and Expansion of the British Dominion in India,' and have quoted the opinions of others with regard to it. Though short, it is the best book yet written upon the subject. Dry statements of historical facts, or supposed facts, we have in plenty, and some of them are valuable as material for a historian. We have also the vivid but misleading pages of Macaulay, and the prejudiced, one can hardly help saying the wilfully perverse, history of James Mill. We have

much else, by other writers, some of it very good. But the first really illuminating work on this period of Indian history is Lyall's. As Prothero points out, it does not pretend to be based on original research, nor does it add largely to our knowledge of events, but it does more: it explains in the clearest and most convincing manner the causes and consequences of known events, and leaves us for the first time with a reasoned and definite idea of the whole achievement. It shows how by the gradual establishment of her maritime supremacy Great Britain became the strongest European nation in Southern Asia; how, when she came into contact with the artificial and ill-knit principalities into which the Moghul Empire had broken up, there was a practical certainty that these must all, sooner or later, gravitate towards the one solid efficient power among them; how in effect the various chiefships of India were naturally and rapidly drawn together into one dominion, under the supremacy of the British Crown; and how that dominion has now consolidated itself and guarded its borders against aggression from the outside. The story is a romantic one, and until Lyall's book appeared it had never been understood. People spoke as if British supremacy had come about by some incomprehensible accident. He showed that there was no accident in the matter, that the British Dominion was in fact the logical and almost inevitable outcome of certain causes which, though obvious enough when pointed out, had hitherto been overlooked. A complete and exhaustive history of India during the British period

has yet to be written, but it is safe to say that when the future historian comes to his task he will approach it by the light of this book.

Lyall's other books are of a more personal nature, though one of them, his 'Warren Hastings,' is also closely concerned with a phase of Indian history, and the Life of Lord Dufferin touches upon a later phase of it. I have already quoted the remarks of Fitzjames Stephen on the first of these books. It is a short but valuable work, and effectually clears the reputation of Hastings from some of the unjust charges brought against him. Lyall might have said more than he has; there is a characteristic want of enthusiasm in the judgment which he passes upon the career of one who has been rightly described as "the greatest man ever sent out by England to govern India." And there is also a certain want of indignation, which is hardly characteristic of Lyall, at the vindictive cruelty with which Hastings was pursued. But perhaps in a sense the exculpation of Hastings is the more effective on that account. At least no one can accuse the writer of prejudice or exaggeration. The extreme moderation, not to say coldness, of Lyall's language in this instance may possibly have been due to the fact that the book was written very soon after his return from India, before he had established his reputation for impartiality and sobriety of judgment. He was conscious of the fact that the opinions of an Indian official on any Indian matter are too often regarded in England with something more than

suspicion, as likely to be warped by local feeling and want of sympathy for the native races; and he may have been specially careful to guard against this danger. A few years later he would have spoken in a different tone. Indeed, he did so, for in his 'Rise and Expansion of the British Dominion in India' he touches upon the controversy about the government of India in the following words—

When the Coalition Ministry took office Fox introduced a Bill altering the whole of the Company's Constitution, which was supported by Burke in a speech loaded with furious invective against Hastings and the Company, both of whom he charged with the most abominable tyranny and corruption. Against some of the Company's servants the true record of misdeeds and errors was sufficiently long; but Hastings was a man of the highest character and capacity, an incorruptible administrator who had done his country great and meritorious services. Yet his integrity was virulently aspersed, and all his public acts wantonly distorted, in speeches that invoked against him the moral indignation of partisans engaged in the ignoble wrangle over places, pensions, and sinecures, among whom none had been exposed to similar trials of a man's courage or constancy, and only a very few would have resisted similar temptations.

And in the same work, I quote from the edition of 1894, Lyall says of Hastings—

When the storm had blown over in India, and he had piloted his vessel into calm water, he was sacrificed with little or no hesitation to party exigencies in England: the Ministry would have recalled him; they consented to his impeachment; they left him to be baited by the Opposition and to be ruined by the law's delay, by the incredible pro-

crastination and the obsolete formalities of a seven years' trial before the House of Lords.

This is hardly the tone of the earlier book.

As to his 'Alfred Tennyson,' I have already quoted Lord Morley's, or rather John Morley's, opinion—

> It is a true masterpiece, and shows that only a poet can judge a poet with true inward feeling and effect.

Prothero, on the other hand, says of it—

> With all its merits—and it has great merits—it is, perhaps, the least successful of his books . . . the criticism cannot be said to be original.

Upon such a work there must be differences of opinion.

My own feeling is, though not for purely literary reasons, that the least successful of Lyall's books is the Life of Lord Dufferin. Prothero says of it—

> It is good; if another had written it one might say it is very good; but it does not display the author at his very best.

This is no doubt a sound opinion. The fact is that, never having worked in close connection with Lord Dufferin, Lyall never got to understand the inner and most essential parts of his character. The picture is a good, even a fine, presentation of Lord Dufferin's outer man, but it is not much more. The heart and soul of the man are not shown. With Lyall's reserve and dislike of anything approaching exaggeration, Lord Dufferin's charming

touch of "blarney," which was purely superficial, may have served to conceal in some measure the real warmth and loyalty of a singularly lovable and high-minded nature. In any case, a sustained narrative of this kind was less suited to Lyall's tastes than essay writing. The labour of arranging and making selections from masses of papers was irksome to him. He was not accustomed to it; he was nearly seventy years of age when he entered upon it; and it would not have been congenial to him at any time. He could never without weariness keep his mind upon any one subject for years or months.

Since these pages were written I have found two of Lyall's letters which bear upon this matter. The first, written in 1903, says—

> I have no skill or experience in writing a biography of this sort; while it entails upon me more actual labour in going through miscellaneous materials than suits my working capacity. . . . I myself was never in close relations with him.

On the other hand, the second letter, written a year later, has these words—

> I have now been through Lord Dufferin's intimate and confidential papers; I think I know him pretty well, and I thoroughly agree with all that you say in his praise. A more kindly or a warmer-hearted man never lived; the best of friends, with plenty of courage and unfailing courtesy; quick-witted and full of racy humour.

The letter goes on to show that Lyall understood others of Lord Dufferin's fine qualities. Possibly,

therefore, the apparent lack of complete appreciation in the book itself is due rather to deliberate reserve, and characteristic coolness of style, than to anything else.

What was really a pleasure to Lyall, and did show him at his very best, was his essay and review work. The following is a list, kindly supplied by the editors, of the principal articles mentioned at the beginning of this chapter:—

FORTNIGHTLY REVIEW.

Our Religious Policy in India. February 1872.
Religion of an Indian Province. April 1872.
The Religious Situation in India. August 1872.
Witchcraft and Non-Christian Religions. April 1873.
Missionary Religions. July 1874.
Origin of Divine Myths in India. September 1875.
Formation of Indian Clans and Casts. January 1877.
Religious Beliefs and Morality. April 1878.
A Rajput Chief of the Old School. A Poem. October 1878.
Relations of Religion to Asiatic States. February 1882.
Race and Religion. December 1902.
The State in its Relations to Eastern and Western Religions. November 1908.

Under the pseudonym of Vamadeo Shastri.

Moral and Material Progress in India. December 1885.
Brahmanism and the Foundations of Belief. November 1895.
The Theological Situation in India. November 1898.

QUARTERLY REVIEW.

Life and Speeches of Sir Henry Maine. April 1893.
History and Fable. January 1894.
Novels of Adventure and Manners. October 1894.
The Second Afghan War. July 1903.

EDINBURGH REVIEW.

The Rajput States of India. July 1876.
Government of the Indian Empire. January 1884.

Life of Mountstuart Elphinstone. July 1884.
England, Afghanistan, and Russia. January 1886.
India in the Jubilee Year (1887). [This article postponed on account of illness.]
Curzon's Russia in Central Asia. January 1890.
The Golden Bough. October 1890.
The Colonial Policy of France. April 1893.
Twelve Years of Indian Government. January 1895.
Life and Correspondence of Sir Bartle Frere. July 1895.
Forty-One Years in India. January 1897.
Origins and Interpretations of Primitive Religions. July 1897.
Alfred Lord Tennyson. October 1897.
Thackeray. October 1898.
The Anglo-Indian Novelist. October 1899.
The Works of Lord Byron. October 1900.
The English Utilitarians. April 1901.
England and Russia during the Nineteenth Century. [This article was in the centenary number of the Review.]
The Political Situation in Asia. July 1906.
Characteristics of Swinburne's Poetry. October 1906.
The Political Situation in Europe. January 1909.
Frontiers Ancient and Modern. July 1909.
L'Empire Libéral (Ollivier). January 1910.
European Dominion in Asia. January 1911.
The Conflict of Colour. April 1911.

It will be seen that these articles deal with various subjects. A large number, especially during his earlier years, when he was writing for the 'Fortnightly,' are connected with religion, and perhaps these are of the greatest permanent value; but many also are on other subjects, historical, political, and literary. The papers show wide knowledge, both of books and of life, and they show deep reflection—a combination of qualities which leads to luminous groupings and conclusions, to clear ideas of things hitherto unseen, or seen in a glass darkly. Reading over Lyall's articles, and comparing them with

the majority of those which one looks through month after month, one is struck by that special feature in his work. It is to an unusual degree illuminating and suggestive.

Shortly before his death, Lyall gathered together some of these articles, adding one or two from other sources, and left on the top of the file a list and note to the following effect: "A selection from this list might be made for republication in a small volume. A. C. Lyall. January 1911." Some dates and other details given in the list, and the full signature instead of the usual initials, make it probable that this note was intended for other eyes in case of his death. The papers are, most of them, not of very recent date, but they are too good to be forgotten; and if republished in book form they would be a valuable addition to the volumes which he gave to the world during his lifetime.

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